

2 DEC DECISIONS

ANXIOUS WAIT FOR NAJIB

Former PM will know today if he can serve rest of current jail term at home while verdict on 1MDB case will be out on Friday

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THIS week marks a critical period for Datuk Seri Najib Razak as the courts prepare to deliver two significant decisions.

Today, the Kuala Lumpur High Court is scheduled to rule on whether Najib will serve the remainder of his six-year jail sentence under house arrest.

On Friday, the same court will deliver its verdict in the long-running 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) corruption trial.

Najib, 72, was previously sentenced to 12 years and fined RM120 million after being found guilty in the SRC International Sdn Bhd criminal breach of trust

case involving RM42 million.

However, the Federal Territories Pardons Board halved the sentence and reduced the fine to RM50 million in 2024.

In April last year, Najib filed a judicial review, seeking to compel the government to enforce a purported “royal addendum” order, which he claimed accompanied the pardon and allowed him to serve out his jail term at home.

The government, in January this year, denied the existence of the addendum or any other documents related to the board’s decision.

The Prime Minister’s Department’s Legal Affairs Division, acting as the board’s secretariat, had said no additional documents were found in the official

files and records related to the issue.

Judge Alice Loke is scheduled to deliver her judgment at 9am today.

A decision in Najib’s favour could see him released immediately from Kajang Prison and allowed to return to his home in Jalan Langgak Duta here.

However, a source from the Attorney-General’s Chambers (A-GC) said the prosecution would appeal should the court rule in Najib’s favour.

Najib’s lawyer, Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, said last Thursday if the court ruled in his client’s favour, the A-GC could appeal the decision but this should not delay his client’s release.

The lawyer said the case involved the liberty of his client, who has been incarcerated since the Federal Court dismissed his final appeal in 2022.

However, even if Najib were to win his bid to serve the remainder of his jail term at home, it

could end up being short-lived.

On Friday, the Kuala Lumpur High Court will deliver its verdict in the largest remaining 1MDB-related trial, which has spanned seven years and involved hundreds of witnesses.

Najib faces four charges of abuse of power and 21 counts of money laundering related to RM2.3 billion allegedly misappropriated from 1MDB.

He has denied all wrongdoing in the case, reiterating his stance that some of the funds were legitimate donations from foreign sources and that he was unaware of illicit transfers.

If convicted on those charges and if presiding judge Datuk Collin Lawrence Sequerah denies a stay of execution, Najib would be required to return to prison immediately.

A stay of execution temporarily suspends a sentence pending appeal. To obtain one, a convicted party must demonstrate valid grounds for the court to exercise its discretion.