

RM2.3B ALLEGEDLY SIPHONED

NAJIB'S 1MDB TRIAL VERDICT TOMORROW

Ex-PM faces 4 charges of misappropriating funds, 21 counts of money laundering

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ON Boxing Day, the High Court will deliver its decision in the RM2.3 billion 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) trial, bringing to a close one chapter of Datuk Seri Najib Razak's myriad legal troubles.

After more than seven years of courtroom skirmishes and marathon proceedings, judge Datuk Collin Lawrence Sequerah will decide whether the former prime minister is guilty or innocent of four charges of misappropriating 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering.

Najib, who once wielded immense power as both prime minister and finance minister, has consistently denied all allegations, maintaining that the funds were political donations and that he was misled by those around him.

The prosecution has argued that Najib was not a passive recipient, but the ultimate decision-maker who enabled and benefitted from a complex web of financial manoeuvres that drained public funds.

The defence, meanwhile, insists the case is riddled with gaps, political motives and unproven assumptions.

If the court finds that Najib's defence team, led by lawyer Tan

Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, has successfully raised reasonable doubt in the prosecution's case, the former Umno president will be acquitted.

Conversely, if Sequerah rules otherwise, Najib will be convicted and sentenced.

He can apply for stay of execution pending appeal at the Court of Appeal.

This could spark another round of drawn-out court battles.

On May 6, the defence closed its case after completing the testimony of 26 defence witnesses over 58 days.

The high-profile trial, which attracted worldwide attention, took a total of 293 days, with the High Court hearing evidence from 50 prosecution witnesses and 26 defence witnesses.

Among the key witnesses who testified at the trial were former 1MDB chairman Tan Sri Mohd



The 1MDB trial of Datuk Seri Najib Razak took 293 days, with the High Court hearing evidence from 50 prosecution and 26 defence witnesses. NSTP PIC BY SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI

Bakke Salleh; former 1MDB chief executive officer Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi; former Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz; 1MDB's former lawyer Jasmine Loo Ai Swan; and the sister of Terengganu ruler

Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin, Tengku Datuk Rahimah Sultan Mahmud.

Najib is currently serving his sentence in Kajang Prison after being convicted of misappropriating RM42 million from SRC International Sdn Bhd.