

POWER ABUSE, MONEY LAUNDERING

EX-PM'S 7 CHARGES TO BE HEARD JOINTLY

This saves time, avoids inconvenience for witnesses, says judge

DAWN CHAN
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

ALL seven charges against former prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, comprising four counts of abuse of power and three of money laundering, will be heard together.

Sessions Court judge Azura Aliwi allowed the prosecution's application for all cases to be jointly tried after considering affidavits, oral and written submissions from both parties.

"At this stage, based on the charges in this case and the prosecution's stance, the court is satisfied with the need (to combine cases) as stipulated under Section 165 of the Criminal

Procedure Code.

"It reads one series of acts so connected together as to form the same transaction committed by the same person is fulfilled to enable cases to be combined and tried together.

"This can also ensure justice for all and save the time of all parties and prevent inconvenience, especially (if it involves) the same witness," she said in her decision.

Azura said on the confusion in the accused putting in his defence, the court felt that no prejudice would occur to him following the joint trial.

"The charges clearly state that he is the accused and the prosecution, had in the last proceedings, stated that it is trite law, that it is the prosecution that needs to prove each ingredient of the charges.

"And it is the court's duty is to decide whether each ingredient in the charges, as charged, had been proven against the accused.

"So, there is no issue of confusion in the accused putting in his defence and he can still

do so," she said.

The prosecution was represented by deputy public prosecutor Datuk Wan Shaharuddin Wan Ladin while lawyers Datuk Seri K. Kumaraendran and Amer Hamzah Arshad acted for the Pagoh member of parliament.

Amer Hamzah told the court that Muhyiddin wanted to withdraw his application to strike out the money laundering charges because it had become academic.

Wan Shaharuddin said the prosecution would call 30 witnesses to testify.

He asked the court to set a mention date to enable the fixing of trial dates and he did not object to Muhyiddin's presence to be exempted on the day.

Azura fixed Feb 18 for mention.

On March 10, 2023, Muhyiddin, who is Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia president, claimed trial to six counts of corruption and power abuse involving RM427.5 million.

The Perikatan Nasional chairman was charged with two counts of receiving RM195 mil-



Former prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin arriving at the Kuala Lumpur Courts Complex yesterday. NSTP PIC BY ASWADI ALIAS

lion funds that are proceeds from unlawful activities between Feb 25 and July 16, 2021, and Feb 8 and July 8, 2022.

He was also charged with four counts of using his position as the prime minister and Bersatu president to ask RM200 million as a bribe from Bukhary Equity Sdn Bhd at the Prime Minister's Department Complex, Federal Government Administrative Centre, Putrajaya between Feb 8 till 25, 2021.

He was also accused of committing the same offence at the same location, by asking for RM32.5 million from Nepturis Sdn Bhd, Mamfor Sdn Bhd and Azman Yusoff for a bribe for the

party between March 1, 2020, and Aug 20, 2021.

On March 13, 2023, he was slapped with his seventh charge at the Shah Alam Sessions Court, which was money laundering amounting to RM5 million in funds from Bukhary Equity which were allegedly proceeds from unlawful activities.

The charge under Section 4(1)(b) of the Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act 2001 carries a jail term not exceeding 15 years and a fine of at least five times the sum obtained from money laundering or RM5 million, whichever is higher, upon conviction.