

TEMPORARY RELEASE OF PASSPORT

MUHYIDDIN ALLOWED TO TRAVEL TO LONDON

But former PM ordered to cut Dubai transit time to maximum of 2 days

DAWN CHAN
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

FORMER prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, 78, has been granted temporary release of his passport to travel to the United Kingdom next month for his annual pancreatic cancer check-up and consultation with a specialist.

However, High Court judge Noor Ruwena Md Nurdin denied

Muhyiddin's request to collect the passport yesterday, ruling that he could obtain it on Dec 8 as his flight to London was scheduled for Dec 15, and there was no urgent need to receive it earlier.

The judge also ordered him to return his passport to the court on Jan 5, instead of his requested Jan 8, saying an up to six-day transit in Dubai before returning to Kuala Lumpur was unnecessary.

Noor Ruwena said she did not find justification for Muhyiddin to take a long transit in Dubai.

"Based on the supporting affidavit, I do not see any justification for the five to six-day transit in Dubai. That part is very glaring. You can do a transit of one to two days, maximum.

"The court has checked the airline and there is a shorter transit.

You can get the dates changed, there are other options."

The judge chided Muhyiddin for booking his flights before obtaining court approval, warning that such actions could open the floodgates for similar cases.

Earlier, Muhyiddin's lawyer, Datuk Amer Hamzah Arshad, requested that his client be given leeway so he could spend time with his family without interruption or harassment from his legal team and prosecution.

He said the trip was not purely a holiday for Muhyiddin, but also for his medical check-up, adding that he was not a flight risk.

Deputy public prosecutor Mahadi Abdul Jumaat, who appeared alongside Noralis Mat, said the prosecution did not object to Muhyiddin travelling to London for medical



Former prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin says he intends to clear his name on money laundering and sedition charges linked to the Jana Wibawa scandal. NSTP PIC BY HAZREEN MOHAMAD

consultations.

But he argued that it was inappropriate for Muhyiddin to also spend time with his family while in London and then continuing on to Madrid before returning to Kuala Lumpur.

"If the court allows his application, the passport release should only be granted until Dec 20."

Muhyiddin said he was not a flight risk and intended to clear his name on money laundering and sedition charges linked to the Jana Wibawa scandal.

The trial is expected to be begin next year.

He added that his family and assets were in Malaysia and, thus, it was impossible for him to abscond.

The Perikatan Nasional chair-

man was charged in 2023 with seven offences, comprising four counts of abuse of power and three counts of money laundering in connection.

Muhyiddin, who was prime minister at the time, allegedly abused his position by soliciting RM232.5 million in bribes for his party from Bukhary Equity Sdn Bhd, Nepturis Sdn Bhd, Mamfor Sdn Bhd and Datuk Azman Yusoff.

The alleged gratification was linked to Jana Wibawa, a government programme introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic to assist Bumiputera contractors.

He also faces three money laundering charges involving RM200 million allegedly received from Bukhary Equity and deposited into Bersatu's AmBank and CIMB Bank accounts.