

Khairuddin, Chang Charged With Attempt To Sabotage Malaysia's Financial Position
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 12 (Bernama) -- Former UMNO Batu Kawan division vice chief Datuk Seri Khairuddin Abu Hassan and lawyer Matthias Chang Wen Chieh were charged in the Magistrate's Court here today with attempting to sabotage Malaysia's banking and financial services.

Khairuddin, 53, and Chang, 65, allegedly committed the offence at five locations between June 28 and Aug 26, this year.

The five alleged locations are, the office of the France Economic and Financial Crimes Division chief in Paris; Charing Cross Police station, London, United Kingdom; office of the Switzerland Attorney General in Bern; WaiChan Police station, Hongkong; and Cantonment Police Headquarters, Singapore.

The charge under Section 124L of the Penal Code (Act 547) read with Section 34 of the same Code, carries a jail term of up to 15 years upon conviction.

No plea were recorded from the two accused when the charge was read to them before Magistrate Siti Radzeah Kamarudin who did not allow bail.

During the proceeding, Khairuddin's counsel Mohamad Hanif Khatri Abdulla requested for bail and speedy transfer of the case to the High Court.

The lawyer said Khairuddin had been in remand for 29 days, and Chang, five days. However, deputy public prosecutor (DPP) Masri Mohd Daud objected: "the charge falls under the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (SOSMA) which is non-bailable".

The DPP asked for one month to transfer the case to the high court.

"The charge against the two accused is like any case, such as drugs and murder. The prosecution needs time.

"This case involves sabotage, to undermine the country. It is more serious than a murder case. We are only applying an existing provision," he said.

Mohamad Hanif also asked that the prosecution first decide on the status of his client's case, whether it was under SOSMA or the Penal Code.

"If this case does not fall under SOSMA, I request for the case to be transferred to the High Court immediately so that there would be no obstruction for the two accused to obtain bail.

"Khairuddin was detained on Sept 23 under SOSMA. Tomorrow had been set for hearing of his habeus corpus application in the high court. But today he is being charged," he said.

Magistrate Siti Radzeah then ordered the prosecution to determine whether the charge against the two accused involved SOSMA or not, and set Oct 26 for mention.

Mohamad Hanif also conveyed a request by Khairuddin's family for the accused to be remanded at Kajang Prison but the magistrate said it was beyond her power to issue the order and could only record the request.

Earlier during the proceeding, the lawyer said he would challenge as unconstitutional, any charge that was brought against his client, and asked the court to record his submission.

Chang was represented by counsel Zainur Zakaria.

Khairuddin and Chang were brought to the court at 9.40 am.

Meanwhile, Khairuddin's wife, actress Umie Aida, who had arrived at the courthouse with family members at 9 am, had a brief conversation with her husband when the proceeding was adjourned.

Also present was Umie Aida's sister, actress Betty Ahmad.

The High Court here meanwhile, rejected Khairuddin and Chang's application for review of the magistrate's decision not to grant them bail.

With the decision, both would be further remanded in prison.

Deputy public prosecutor Mohd Dusuki Mokhtar told reporters that Justice Datuk Azman Hussin dismissed the application which was made in a letter, without any proceeding.

He said the High Court deputy registrar only informed the parties involved that the judge had ordered the applicants' lawyers to duly file an official application accompanied with a notice of motion, affidavit in support and other documents.

Counsel Mohamad Hanif said he would either file an appeal against justice Azman's decision or submit another application tomorrow.

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