

## **Judge rejects stay bid, orders Najib, 1MDB to file defence**

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The Kuala Lumpur High Court has ordered Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, 1MDB and the government to file their defence in a suit by Pakatan Harapan Youth with regard to 1MDB's settlement with the International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC)

This follows Justice Hue Siew Kheng's decision to dismiss a written application by the three defendants for a stay to file their defence.

Earlier this month, the court had dismissed their application to strike out the case.

Justice Hue ordered the defendants to file their defence by Feb 9. The decision was made in the judge's chambers today.

This was related by lawyers Haniff Khatri Abdulla and Rafique Rashid Ali who represented the Harapan youths from Gerakan Anak Muda Tolak Najib (GANT1).

Meanwhile, Najib's lawyer Mohd Hafarizam Harun has indicated to Malaysiakini that they will file an appeal against today's decision at the Court of Appeal.

Haniff said Justice Hue reasoned that the filing of the defence would not prejudice the defendants as it has been six months since the suit was filed.

"Furthermore, there is no averment on oath that any part of the consent award (with IPIC) was purportedly under the Official Secrets Act or any other restrictions to stop filing the defence," he added.

GANT1 had filed the suit in July last year to stop the payments to IPIC.

The suit sought a declaration that the arbitration agreement agreed between IPIC and Aabar Investment PJS on May 11 last year be declared null and void.

They also wanted the details of the payment to IPIC and Aabar Investments PJS to be revealed to them.

The movement also sought a declaration that if Najib, 1MDB, and government are found to be liable for excess payment to IPIC, then this amount is to be returned to a special fund.

The group further wanted the liberty to file committal proceedings against Najib, 1MDB and the government if they are found to be liable.

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