



12 SEP, 2026

Prof acquitted over false claims

Daily Express (KK), Malaysia



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Cynthia D Baga

KOTA KINABALU: A university professor was acquitted of 21 charges of making false claims totalling RM66,190 involving research funds related to Sabah's marine life.

Sessions Court Judge Jason Juga discharged and acquitted Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) professor Prof Dr Charles Santhanaraju Vairappan, 59, after ruling that the prosecution had failed to establish a prima facie case against him.

The decision was made at the end of the prosecution's case.

Dr Charles, from Penang, was accused of submitting expense claim documents



containing false details to UMS' Treasury Department between May 2014 and April 2017.

The charges involved claims for diving activities, boat charters to several islands in Sabah and van rentals. The prosecution alleged that the activities had not taken place.

The charges were brought under Section 18 of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act 2009, which



Dr Charles with his lawyers after the proceedings on Friday.

carries a maximum jail term of 20 years and a fine of five times the amount involved or RM10,000, whichever is

higher, upon conviction.

The prosecution called 26 witnesses during the trial.

In his decision, Jason said the prosecution had failed to prove the essential elements of all 21 charges and that there were doubts in the evidence presented.

The court subsequently discharged and acquitted Dr Charles without requiring him to enter his defence.

The court also ordered that his bail deposit be refunded and his passport returned.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Rustam Sanip appeared for the prosecution, while Zahir Shah and Baldev Singh represented Dr Charles.



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SUMMARIES

Cynthia D Baga KOTA KINABALU: A university professor was acquitted of 21 charges of making false claims totalling RM66,190 involving research funds related to Sabah's marine life. Sessions Court Judge Jason Juga discharged and acquitted Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) professor Prof Dr Charles Santhanaraju Vairappan, 59, after ruling that the prosecution had failed to establish a prima facie case against him. The decision was made at the end of the prosecution's case.