

# MACC confirms detaining CEO



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NATION

Sunday, 03 Oct 2021



Under investigation: The company CEO linked to the uCustoms project is in remand for six days.

KUALA LUMPUR: A 56-year-old chief executive officer was detained by graft busters in connection with the uCustoms project. He was detained on Friday night after going to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to assist with investigations. The arrest was confirmed by MACC chief commissioner, Datuk Seri Azam Baki. The suspect, who was brought to the Magistrate's Court in Putrajaya yesterday, was represented by lawyers Daljit Singh and Nicholas Mark Pereira. Daljit said his client has been remanded for six days. He added that his client's company will issue a statement on the matter soon. The uCustoms project was recently mentioned in the Auditor-General's report. What was supposed to be a cost-saving system ended up becoming a whopping RM273mil loss for the government. The Customs Department's "uCustoms" project, which kicked off in 2013, was meant to be a modern online system to increase efficiency and save cost. However, seven years on and five extensions later, the million-ringgit project has yet to materialise. The Auditor-General's 2019 report (Series 2) found that RM273mil in payments were made towards the project, but the system meant to replace the one in use since 1995, was not completed. Out of 3,876 deliverables, only 1,056 or 27.2% have been received by the Customs Department, while only three out of 70 main modules have been completed and are operational. "Overall, it can be summed up that the development of the uCustoms system failed to be completed within seven years and two months (86 months), even after five extensions of time (EOT) were given. "A total of RM272.99mil was paid to suppliers and the project management office, while liquidated ascertained damages (LAD) of RM55,650 was imposed. "A notice of LAD charges amounting to RM3.94mil was issued on Dec 31, 2020, for EOT 3 and EOT 4 to Company 374044-H," the report said.

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