



Ho Kay Tat, publisher of the *Edge*, a Malaysian weekly, drove the early coverage of the 1MDB scandal. In 2015, the *Edge*, along with the *Sarawak Report*, got ahold of PetroSaudi documents from Xavier Justo and published a series of damning stories. Prime Minister Najib suspended the *Edge*'s publication license and had Ho detained for a night in July 2015.

Here Ho greets journalists after his release. *The Malaysian Insider*

[OceanofPDF.com](http://OceanofPDF.com)



In June 2015, Thai police arrested Xavier Justo on charges of attempting to blackmail PetroSaudi. One of his first visitors in a Bangkok jail was a former British policeman called Paul Finnigan, who was working with PetroSaudi. Finnigan promised to get Justo out by December if he pleaded guilty, according to a later criminal complaint. Justo did as he was told, but in August a Thai judge sentenced him to three years in prison. *Royal Thai Police*

[OceanofPDF.com](http://OceanofPDF.com)



Prime Minister Najib's kleptocratic regime sparked protests from ordinary Malaysians. A group known as Bersih, the Malay word for "clean," organized large demonstrations in 2015 and 2016 calling for Najib to step down over the 1MDB scandal. Here, protesters hold up caricatures (from left to right) of Riza Aziz, Rosmah Mansor, Najib, and Low. *Getty Images*



In July 2016, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced the Justice Department was moving forward with a civil lawsuit, seeking to seize \$1 billion in assets bought with money stolen from 1MDB. The assets included Low's Time Warner Center apartment, the proceeds from *The Wolf of Wall Street*, as well as multiple other homes, his stake in EMI Music Publishing, and more. The lawsuit referred to Najib as "Malaysian Official 1." *U.S.*

*Department of Justice*

[OceanofPDF.com](http://OceanofPDF.com)

## Acknowledgments

Writing a book is a team endeavor, and we're fortunate to work with a group of talented journalists. At the *Wall Street Journal*, Patrick Barta, Paul Beckett, and Ken Brown were instrumental in the success of this project.

It was Ken's early obsession with this story that got us interested, and his sage counsel, as Asia finance editor, kept the project on track. From his position of Asia editor, Paul gave us cover to pursue in-depth reporting, a luxury we don't take for granted. His unparalleled news judgment and enthusiasm for the story gave us impetus. Patrick skillfully edited many of our pieces, ensuring the significance was not lost in a morass of detail, while making certain our facts were always locked down. All three were the earliest readers of our draft manuscript, and gave us invaluable (and honest!) feedback on structuring, character development, and even pointing out where we had fallen into cliché. Without them, we would not have completed this book.

Thanks to Gerard Baker, the *Wall Street Journal's* former editor in chief, and our other bosses—Thorold Barker, Dennis Berman, Rebecca Blumenstein, Andrew Dowell, and Charles Forelle—for giving us the space and time to pursue this project. In an age of round-the-clock news, the *Journal's* commitment to deep reporting marks it apart.

The *Wall Street Journal's* talented team of lawyers and standards editors ensured we met the highest levels of accuracy for which the paper is known. They helped shape our coverage of an extremely complicated and contentious issue. They include Jason Conti, Jacob Goldstein, Craig Linder, Neal Lipschutz, Karen Pensiero, and Rob Rossi. The page-one editing team, led by Alex Martin, and later Matthew Rose, and including Mike Allen, Dan Kelly, and Mitchell Pacelle, skillfully shaped our pieces.

A number of fellow reporters played a significant role in the coverage of

this story: Justin Baer and Mia Lamar led the reporting on Goldman Sachs; Jake Maxwell Watts was industrious following developments in Singapore; Kelly Crow detailed Low's art market purchases; while Simon Clark played an important early role in coverage. In Los Angeles, John Emshwiller and Ben Fritz followed the Hollywood angles, John Letzing covered investigations in Switzerland, and Nicolas Parasie monitored events in Abu Dhabi. Rachel Louise Ensign and Serena Ng looked at the arcane world of law funds.

Celine Fernandez's brave and tenacious reporting in Malaysia led to early breakthroughs on 1MDB's role as a slush fund. James Hookway and Yantoultra Ngui of the *Journal's* Southeast Asia bureau, headed by Patrick McDowell, covered the political reaction in Malaysia.

Paolo Bosonin and Tom Di Fonzo of the *Journal's* video department produced creative animations and a documentary on the 1MDB scandal, which greatly enhanced our coverage. The *Journal's* art department, led by Jessica Yu and MinJung Kim, crafted original ways of bringing the scandal to life through graphics.

Clare Rewcastle-Brown, whose *Sarawak Report* website broke the first stories on Jho Low, generously shared information and helped us understand the early stages of the fraud. Her website, replete with documents and screen grabs of social media sites before they got taken down, was an important resource for us.

Alex Helan, who was making a documentary about Jho Low, also shared sources and carefully read our manuscript, proffering perceptive suggestions about how to improve the book.

To our editor, Paul Whitlatch at Hachette Books, a huge debt of gratitude. His deft early reading of the manuscript led us away from density and toward lightness. It's still a complex tale, but Paul's sense for a story helped make this a more readable work, and his skilled hand gave the prose more vigor. Thanks also to our agents, Steve Troha and Dado Derviskadic at Folio Literary Management, for seeing the potential in this project when it was just a short proposal.

Keith Richburg, director of the University of Hong Kong's Journalism and Media Studies Center, supplied a wonderful space to work on this book and free coffee, as well as carefully reading parts of the draft. Tiernan Downes, who read the draft at least twice, and Nadia Chiarina offered a

palatial home in Jakarta for writing. Sue Wright and Mark Hope provided valuable feedback on style and substance.

A number of other people read the manuscript or offered important guidance; they include Sylvain Besson, Luca Fasani, Alex Frangos, Liz Hoffman, Mark Hollingsworth, Deborah Kan, John Lyons, Dejan Nikolic, Andrew Peale, Raphael Pura, Brad Reagan, Justin Scheck, and Ben Wootliff. There are many others we wish we could thank, but for their safety or by preference they remain anonymous. We appreciate their trust.

Finally, our families—Tom’s wife, Nina, and Bradley’s wife, Farah—provided real-time feedback on draft chapters and endured our obsession over multiple years. Without their support, the book would not have been written.

[OceanofPDF.com](http://OceanofPDF.com)

**Thank you for buying this ebook, published by Hachette  
Digital.**

To receive special offers, bonus content, and news about our latest ebooks  
and apps, sign up for our newsletters.

Sign Up

Or visit us at [hachettebookgroup.com/newsletters](http://hachettebookgroup.com/newsletters)

[OceanofPDF.com](http://OceanofPDF.com)