

The Star September 2019

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1. Jho Low a master manipulator, says Najib's ex-aide



KUALA LUMPUR: Fugitive financier Low Taek Jho was a "master manipulator" who knew how to manipulate in his dealings with officers of all levels and rankings - whether in Malaysia or abroad, the High Court heard.

Former special officer to the former prime minister, Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin, 43, testified that in his experience with the man commonly, known as Jho Low, his former boss Datuk Seri Najib Razak knew this trait.

"Therefore, only Jho Low and Najib would know the bigger picture relating to the strategy they planned.

"Jho Low was a master manipulator and in this instance, I could say that I was used for dishonest purposes," he said on the third day of the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) trial here on Tuesday (Sept 3).

Amhari, who was reading from his witness statement, said there were many things that he and Najib's late principal private secretary Datuk Seri Azlin Alias only found out after news of the 1MDB scandal broke.

This, he said, was because both he and Azlin's tasks were divided by silos.

Earlier, Amhari had told the court that Najib was a strategist, brilliant in delegating special tasks relating to confidential matters.

"Each officer who served him would only know matters relating to his own tasks only.

"They would never get the bigger picture to the end game of their mission or the task given to

them," he added.

Amhari, who is now jobless, said Najib practised this to ensure confidentiality and to have his officers give him different opinions so that he would have the advantage of seeing things holistically.

The hearing before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues on Wednesday (Sept 4).

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He was charged with the four abuse of power charges under Section 23(1) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act, punishable under Section 24(1) of the same law.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

2. 1MDB trial: Najib's ex-special officer shocked to see RM3.36mil in bank account



KUALA LUMPUR: A former special officer to Datuk Seri Najib Razak was shocked when he found out that more than USD\$800,000 (RM3.36mil) was banked into his foreign bank account.

Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin, 43, testified that he received a phone call from BSI Switzerland in early 2016, informing him of the matter.

"The officer who called me asked whether I knew about my bank balance and I said I did not know.

"The officer then told me that there was more than USD\$800,000 in my account. I was so shocked, as I had no clue about the money," he told the High Court at the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) trial here on Wednesday (Sept 4).

At a later time, Amhari was contacted again by BSI Bank, who informed him that his relationship with the bank would be terminated and he needed to move the money to either a company under his name, or another bank account of his.

(Amhari had opened the account with BSI in Singapore upon instructions by fugitive financier Low Taek Jho, or better known as Jho Low.

During a meeting in 2012, Jho Low instructed both Amhari and the late principal private secretary to Najib, Datuk Seri Azlin Alias, to open bank accounts overseas under their names for Najib's political purposes.)

"I referred the matter to Jho Low, who instructed me to open an account with Kasikorn Bank in Bangkok," he said.

The process to open the account was assisted by a Thai, who was Jho Low's acquaintance.

"The acquaintance was not a bank officer and I do not remember his name. The name was on the application form and listed as an 'introducer', " Amhari added.

The witness said bank applications in Bangkok would have taken time, usually less than a month, but his Bangkok bank account was successfully opened right then.

The money transfer to Kasikorn, however, was unsuccessful.

"BSI informed me that the matter was delayed and a bank officer would get in touch with me if there was any update. I told Jho Low about this and he said he would resolve it on my behalf.

"Until now, I do not know what happened with the money in the account, " he added.

Amhari said he had never withdrew the money for personal use or transferred it elsewhere.

"The account was managed and controlled fully by Jho Low for political funds as he had mentioned, " he said.

The hearing continues before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah on Thursday (Sept 5).

Najib's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah is expected to conduct his cross-examination on the witness.

Najib, 66, is facing four charges of having used his position to obtain gratification totalling RM2.3bil from 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

3. MCA asks why no news on probe into leaked MACC papers on Penang undersea tunnel



GEORGE TOWN: It has been six months but there is still no news on police investigations into the leak of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) investigation papers on the Penang undersea tunnel project, says the MCA.

"What is the latest on the Penang undersea tunnel project? Is it still under KIV (keep in view) status?"

"Has a warrant of arrest been issued to blogger Raja Petra Kamarudin?"

"Why is it taking so long for the police to complete the investigation?" its president Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong (*pic*) asked in a Facebook posting on Wednesday (Sept 4).

It was earlier reported that the MACC had lodged a police report over leaked investigation papers into the project.

Political blogger Raja Petra Kamarudin, in a series of articles posted on his blog previously, wrote an expose based on the leaked documents.

He alleged that several Penang state exco members were implicated in the MACC probe into the project.

Dr Wee was also quoted as saying Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohamed Hanipa Maidin had admitted that MACC had lodged a police report on Feb 28 over the alleged leaked documents.

Dr Wee said Mohamed Hanipa had told him to obtain a copy of the police report by MACC on his own.

He wrote to the then Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Mohamad Fuzi Harun and the then MACC chief commissioner Datuk Seri Shukri Abdull on April 2.

"Unfortunately, it has been five months and both of them have since retired," he said.

Dr Wee said in April, businessman G. Gnanaraja was charged with deceiving Consortium Zenith Construction Sdn Bhd (CZC) senior executive director Datuk Zarul Ahmad Mohd Zulkifli into paying him RM19mil to help resolve the MACC probe into the undersea tunnel project.

"The question here is, several individuals or high-profile politicians were mentioned by Zarul in the investigation papers.

"Why was only Gnanaraja charged in court? The rakyat are questioning whether this is selective prosecution.

"It can't be that half of the contents in the leaked MACC investigation papers is the truth while the other half is false.

"I hope the relevant authorities would enlighten us on this," he added in the Facebook posting.

The 7.2km undersea tunnel is part of a RM6.3bil project that includes three paired roads.

4. Dr Wee hopes new IGP, MACC chief commissioner will help get police report on Penang tunnel project



PETALING JAYA: Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong (*pic*) is hoping that new leadership within the police and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) will help him in obtaining a copy of a police report lodged over the leaked investigation papers into the Penang Undersea Tunnel project.

The MCA president said he had written to new Inspector-General of Police Datuk Seri Abdul Hamid Bador about his request on Thursday (Sept 5) and sent a copy of the letter to new MACC chief commissioner Latheefa Koya and Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohamed Hanipa Maidin.

"I hope with the new leadership in the police and MACC in place, I will be able to obtain a copy of the report, as I have been waiting for a while," he said.

Dr Wee said he had written a similar letter to Abdul Hamid's and Latheefa's predecessors, Tan Sri Mohamad Fuzi Harun and Datuk Seri Mohd Shukri Abdull, as advised by Mohamed Hanipa on April 1.

Mohamad Fuzi retired in May, while Mohd Shukri opted for early retirement in August.

It was earlier reported that the MACC had lodged a police report over leaked investigation papers into the Undersea Tunnel project in Penang.

Political blogger Raja Petra Kamarudin, in a series of articles posted on his blog previously, wrote an expose based on the leaked documents.

He alleged that several Penang state exco members were implicated in the MACC probe into the project.

Dr Wee also said Mohamed Hanipa Maidin admitted that MACC had lodged a police report on Feb 28 over the alleged leaked documents.

Dr Wee said Mohamed Hanipa had told him to obtain a copy of the police report by MACC on his own.

5. Dr Wee: I have explained how Penang tunnel project exceeds RM20bil



GEORGE TOWN: Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong (*pic*) has explained how the actual cost of the Penang undersea tunnel project could have exceeded RM20bil.

"I have already explained and it can be seen from my Facebook post five days ago.

"Did he pretend to not see it?

"The truth is, I am questioning the actual cost of the project, which is RM20bil, and not RM3.6bil.

"What else does he want to say? What is his excuse to avoid a debate with me?" asked the MCA president.

In his Facebook posting, Dr Wee explained how Penang people would suffer a financial loss of RM20.54bil due to the controversial undersea tunnel and the three paired roads project.

Among his arguments are that the special purpose vehicle (SPV) in charge of the project was given a 30-year concession, meaning a conservative average of RM100mil of toll collection a year meant the concessionaire would rake in RM3bil throughout the 30 years.

He also questioned how a project that was tagged at RM6.34bil six years ago would still cost the same in 2026, which is when the construction is expected to begin.

It would appear that inflation and increase in land prices in Penang were not taken into account, he said.

Dr Wee had earlier issued a fresh challenge to Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng to debate the project.

He said Lim had previously rejected his bid to hold a debate on the matter, with the contention that Dr Wee was not the MCA president at that time.

Dr Wee, who is now the MCA president, said he could debate Lim now.

He added that he did not mind debating Chow in his capacity as the chief minister if Lim continued to chicken out by giving other excuses.

Chow agreed to the debate on condition that Wee explained the RM20bil figure for the tunnel and road projects, and only if Lim did not want to debate.

He said what was brought up by Dr Wee was RM16.4bil more than the cost of RM3.6bil, as mentioned by the state government.

"What is there to debate if it does not help the state government to reduce its cost?" asked Chow.

The state government is paying for the mega project via a land swap of 44.5ha of reclaimed land in Seri Tanjung Pinang and a toll concession for the tunnel for at least 30 years.

Besides the undersea tunnel project, the other projects are the 5.7km Ayer Itam-Lebuhraya Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu bypass, North Coastal Paired Road between Tanjung Bungah and Teluk Bahang and the bypass connecting Gurney Drive to Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu Expressway.

6. Dr Wee: I've never asked details of leaked investigation papers over undersea tunnel project



PETALING JAYA: Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong (*pic*) says that he had never requested for the investigation details of the leaked investigation papers into the Penang Undersea Tunnel project.

In refuting the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief commissioner Latheefa Koya's comment, the MCA president said he had merely asked for a copy of the police report lodged over the case.

"I am appalled by what Latheefa Koya said as reported in a news portal.

"Why made it sound like I was asking for the investigation papers from the MACC? You missed the point, Latheefa.

"I know I have no rights or power to ask for the investigation papers from the MACC. What is this sudden diversion of topic?" he said in his Facebook post on Friday night (Sept 6).

It was reported earlier that Latheefa said the commission and other investigative agencies may not divulge details of investigations that are active, and that such information would only be publicly disclosed in the event charges are filed.

She was responding to a question about the written requests sent to her and Inspector-General of Police Datuk Seri Abdul Hamid Bador by Dr Wee earlier.

The MCA president had written to Abdul Hamid about his request on Thursday (Sept 5) and sent a copy of the letter to Latheefa and Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohamed Hanipa Maidin.

Dr Wee, who is also Ayer Hitam MP, said that Mohamed Hanipa had in the Dewan Rakyat on April 1, told him to obtain a copy of the police report by MACC on his own.

Dr Wee said he had written a similar letter to Abdul Hamid and Latheefa's predecessors, Tan Sri Mohamad Fuzi Harun and Datuk Seri Mohd Shukri Abdull, as advised by Mohamed Hanipa.

Mohamad Fuzi retired in May, while Mohd Shukri opted for early retirement in August.

"The MACC had in March said the investigation papers has been submitted to the Attorney General Chambers, pending a decision.

"Six months have gone and the people are still not informed about the latest status into the case's investigation via any statements.

"Why is it so difficult to get a copy of the police report? Didn't Mohamed Hanipa said it is easy to just request for it from the police?

"After 156 days, the copy of the report is still not obtained while the IGP and MACC chief commissioner have been replaced.

"Why? (Do I) have to wait another five months?" he added.

It was earlier reported that the MACC had lodged a police report over leaked investigation papers into the Undersea Tunnel project in Penang.

Political blogger Raja Petra Kamarudin, in a series of articles posted on his blog previously, wrote an expose based on the leaked documents.

He alleged that several Penang state exco members were implicated in the MACC probe into the project.

7. 1MDB Trial: Jho Low gave TIA RM70k cash



KUALA LUMPUR: Fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low, loaned RM70,000 to Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi in 2009, in order to increase the share capital of Terengganu Investment Authority Berhad (TIA).

The High Court heard on Tuesday (Sept 24), during former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's 1MDB corruption trial, that the funds were deposited straight into Shahrol's account.

Shahrol, 49, who was former chief executive officer of 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), was then TIA's chief executive officer.

Under examination by lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram, Shahrol said that the funds were given by Low as the newly-founded sovereign wealth fund - which served as a precursor to 1MDB - was in the midst of obtaining government guarantee for its issuance of bonds.

Sri Ram: Was any money extended for this purpose?

Shahrol: Yes, RM70,000.

Sri Ram: Did the company have RM70,000?

Shahrol: Not at that time.

Sri Ram: Where did the money come from?

Shahrol: It was Low who gave me the money.

Shahrol told the court that he had told Low that TIA needed more funds and that it was an "emergency".

"The next day, the amount (RM70,000) appeared in my (personal) bank account," he said, adding that it was credited via cash deposit.

Shahrol said that he gave the RM70,000 to TIA in the form of a director's loan, and was later reimbursed for the same amount after the wealth fund had obtained proceeds from the bonds issued.

"I then told Low that I wanted to give the money back to him, but he kept saying 'later, later'.

"So, I stopped asking and used the money for charitable purposes," he said, adding that one of the charitable acts he did using the money was to sponsor a group of orphans to watch a performance at Istana Budaya here.

The court also heard that Shahrol and others at TIA had worked at an "extremely frantic" pace to obtain the government guarantee for the bonds issue.

"We were moving at super-speed as there was a sense of urgency and a sense that - at least for me - there is a need to prove to the stakeholders that we can be trusted to deliver," he said, adding that the stakeholders referred to were then-Yang Di-Pertuan Agong and Terengganu ruler Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin and Najib.

Shahrol, who is the eight prosecution witness, was still in the midst of reading his 270-page witness statement.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

The trial continues before High Court judge Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah in the afternoon.

8. 1MDB trial recap: September 3 to 5



KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama): There was an explosive testimony from Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin, who was the former special officer to Datuk Seri Najib Razak, over the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) scandal.

Following are the highlights of testimonies from Amhari Efendi, 43, at the trial before Judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah from Sept 3-5.

Najib, 66, is facing four charges of having used his positions to obtain gratification totalling RM2.3bil in 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

Najib, who is also Pekan MP, is alleged to have committed four counts of corruption at Jalan Raja Chulan branch of AmIslamic Bank Berhad, at No. 55, Jalan Raja Chulan, Bukit Ceylon here between Feb 24,2011, and Dec 19,2014.

For the 21 money laundering charges, Najib is alleged to have committed the offences at the same bank between March 22,2013, and Aug 30,2013.

The trial before Judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues next Tuesday (Sept 10).

Day 3 (Sept 3): Amhari Efendi tells the High Court that Low Taek Jho or Jho Low was the unofficial special advisor to the former prime minister as he carried out various behind-the-scene tasks including managing 1MDB, international programmes, working visits, business proposals and policies, as well as welfare work for Najib.

Amhari Efendi, who was then with the Economics Division at the Prime Minister's Office, says Jho Low also orchestrated investment dealings, inter-government or government-to-government (G2G) negotiations, political as well as fund manoeuvres for the former prime minister.

"Every directive given by Jho Low must be carried out because I believed he had obtained prior approval from Najib. I never questioned the directives, but sometimes when necessary, Datuk Azlin Alias, who was then Najib's principal private secretary, or I myself, did refer to Najib for confirmation.

"Most of the time, I would be informed by Najib that the instructions given by Jho Low were approved by him, and Datuk Azlin also noted to me that Jho Low's instructions once confirmed by Najib must be followed up," says Amhari Efendi when reading out his 77-page witness statement during the examination-in-chief by deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib.

The eighth prosecution witness testifies that Jho Low became very close to Najib's family after befriending Najib's stepson, Riza Shahriz Abdul Aziz, and he knew about it during his dealings with Jho Low where he informed him several times on how close he was to Najib's family.

"To my knowledge, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor (Najib's wife) was also very close to Jho Low as I noticed that he frequently received calls from Datin Seri Rosmah, but I never asked about the details of their conversations," he says, adding that it was Riza Aziz who introduced Jho Low to Rosmah.

Amhari Efendi, who is one of the key prosecution witnesses, tells the court that the exposure in 2015 that Riza Aziz had purchased luxury real estate and financed a Hollywood movie with 1MDB funds affected Najib the most.

"Sarawak Report at that time showed that Riza received money from 1MDB and this affected Datuk Seri Najib as Riza is his stepson," he says.

The High Court is also told that the Terengganu Investment Authority (TIA) project, an idea mooted by Jho Low, was Najib's "baby".

Amhari Efendi says Jho Low had prepared five "damage control" letters after the 1MDB scandal blew up, to show proof that 1MDB and PetroSaudi had not acted out of line in their joint venture.

Day 4 (Sept 4): On the opening of foreign account banks, Amhari Efendi testifies that "Jho Low also told us (he and Azlin) to be assured, not to worry, and to trust him, telling us that 'boss will take care'."

"The 'boss' he referred to was Najib. Datuk Azlin also expressed his unease but Jho Low reiterated that all these would be done above board, through proper documentation and using a well-known and reputable bank. Datuk Azlin just kept quiet. Jho Low said he would come back to us on this issue and left the meeting".

He says the bank accounts ordered to be opened overseas were likely for money laundering purposes to receive political funds for Najib in facing the 13th general election (GE13) in 2013, and Jho Low ordered him and Azlin to open separate foreign bank accounts.

The witness also says that Najib had knowledge of and had given the mandate to Jho Low to plan and handle efforts to save the debt-ridden 1MDB and its subsidiary SRC International Sdn Bhd.

He says following that, on Nov 1 and 2, 2016, Najib went on an official visit to China with a goal to pursue Malaysia-China joint-venture projects with a number of companies.

Amhari Efendi tells the High Court that China State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (Sasac) and China State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) were supposed to finalise the agreement to settle the debt issue facing 1MDB and its subsidiary SRC before the end of July or August 2016.

He says the matter was decided at a meeting held in China on June 28, 2016, with Sasac.

He also says he felt very pressured when he was instructed by Najib to travel to China to conduct confidential work to facilitate the bailout of 1MDB in June 2016.

"Datuk Seri Najib himself asked me to go to his residence in Jalan Langgak Duta to discuss this matter, explaining that the trip would be arranged by Jho Low.

"I had to comply although at the time I was under intense pressure and had thoughts of stopping work because these orders were placing a great burden on me, more so since Datuk Azlin was no longer there (Azlin had died on April 4, 2015).

"Nevertheless, I had to follow his (Najib) orders because he was my boss, what more, he was the Prime Minister of Malaysia," recounts Amhari Efendi, looking visibly distraught.

The witness also tells the High Court that the former prime minister instructed him to meet with Mubadala chief executive officer Khaldoon Mubarak in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, in 2016 to discuss settling 1MDB's bond dispute with International Petroleum Investment Co (Ipic) without going to the International Court.

He says Najib also told him that if Malaysia were to go to the international court for failing to pay the bonds guaranteed by Ipic, bilateral relations between the two countries would deteriorate.

He adds that Jho Low had prepared the questions that were expected to be asked by several quarters, including the media, together with damage control answers on 1MDB, which was then widely reported by the mass media.

Day 5 (Sept 5): Amhari Efendi maintains he had personally witnessed the closeness of their (Jho Low and Najib) relationship, where Jho Low went to Najib's house more frequently than anyone else.

He also describes Jho Low as a puppet master as he could manipulate anyone, regardless of status, and was able to engage different people at different places to get what he wanted.

9. Witness denies colluding with Jho Low to implicate Najib in 1MDB scandal

KUALA LUMPUR: The former special officer to Datuk Seri Najib Razak has denied trying to implicate his former boss in the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) scandal and colluding with fugitive financier Low Taek Jho.

Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin, 43, disagreed with a suggestion by Najib's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah that he was working together with Low, who is also known as Jho Low, and was inconsistent with his testimony.

Shafee: You are inconsistent because you are not telling the truth and fabricating the evidence. That's how you want to implicate Najib. By saying Low's (also known as Jho Low) instructions were Najib's instructions.

Shafee: When in fact you work hand-in-hand with Low. That is why you were rewarded with US\$1mil (RM4.17mil at current rates); US\$200,000 (RM834,000) in an unpaid loan and US\$800,000 (RM3.34mil) in your bank account.

Amhari: I disagree.

The court had earlier heard testimonies that Amhari was shocked when he was informed by his bank that about US\$800,000 was deposited into his account and that he took a US\$200,000 loan from Low.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty. The trial continues before High Court judge Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah tomorrow (Sept 11).

10. Amhari: I did not declare US\$200,000 loan from Jho Low for property purchase



KUALA LUMPUR: Despite then being a public servant, Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin did not declare the US\$200,000 loan he received from fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low, in 2010, the High Court heard.

Amhari, who was former special officer to Datuk Seri Najib Razak, said this under cross-examination by defence counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah during day six of the former prime minister's 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) corruption trial on Tuesday (Sept 10).

The 43-year-old also confirmed that he did not pay any interest for the loan, nor did he repay the US\$200,000 to Low.

Shafee: Would you agree with me that you did not pay interest for the US\$200,000 loan?

Amhari: No interest.

Shafee: You did not pay the US\$200,000 principal?

Amhari: I have not.

Shafee: You are aware at that time you took the loan that you were a public officer?

Amhari: Yes.

Shafee: You did not declare the US\$200,000 loan to the government?

Amhari: I did not.

Shafee: You realise it could be an offence on your part?

Amhari: I was not clear at that time that it was an offence.

Amhari then confirmed that he was aware at that time that Low was a businessman, who had dealings with government departments such as the Prime Minister's Office and the Finance Ministry.

He, however, said he was unaware of any deals between Low and the government departments at that time.

Earlier, Amhari told the court that he had taken the loan from Low after being unable to obtain one from local financial institutions.

He said the loan was meant for property matters, as he was trying to purchase a property in Kota Damansara, Petaling Jaya.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He was charged with the four abuse of power charges under Section 23(1) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act, punishable under Section 24(1) of the same law.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

The trial continues under High Court judge Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah in the afternoon.

11. Najib was 'briefed' to say Jho Low had no role in 1MDB, says ex-aide



KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak was briefed on a document stating that fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low, had no role in 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), the High Court heard on Tuesday (Sept 10).

Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin, who was special officer to the former prime minister, said the document was a frequently asked questions (FAQs) sheet that was prepared by Low himself.

Amhari, under cross-examination from defence counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, said Najib was briefed on the FAQs sheet by the late Datuk Seri Azlin Alias, who was the former premier's principal private secretary.

"It (the document) was prepared by Low himself and it was the (base for) statements for relevant key individuals to say," Amhari explained, adding that one of the points was to say that Low had no role in 1MDB.

"He (Low) also suggested that Najib say this as well," he added.

When asked by Shafee whether Amhari kept a copy of this document, Amhari replied that he was given a copy but that it was not with him at the moment.

"I think it is one of the documents that was seized (by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission)," he said.

He added that after that meeting with Low, the latter had asked for the document to be shredded.

Amhari, 43, is the eight prosecution witness in Najib's RM2.3bil 1MDB corruption trial.

The court also heard that Low was often present at "exclusive" parties held at Najib's private residence, hosted either by the former prime minister himself or his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

Amhari said this when questioned by Shafee on how close he perceived Rosmah and Low to be.

Shafee: How do you know that Low was that close to Rosmah?

Amhari: On several occasions, during my meetings (with Low) with Azlin, I could hear Low speaking to Rosmah on the phone.

And when I met Rosmah, she spoke fondly of Low.

Shafee: And Low told you about his relationship with the family and Rosmah?

Amhari: Yes.

Shafee: Did you attend any functions where you could see how close they were?

Amhari: Some functions and some meet-ups, mostly at (number) 11 (Najib's private residence in Jalan Duta, Kuala Lumpur). I do not want to generalise a person's private life but for some of the private functions that Najib and Rosmah organised in the early years, I would see Low there as well. These were very exclusive.

Shafee: From there you concluded that they were close?

Amhari: Yes.

The court also heard that Amhari did not tell Najib that Low's name was brought up in a meeting concerning the Terengganu Investment Authority (TIA) in 2009, which Amhari attended.

Shafee: (It was mentioned) that he was not the representative of the then-Yang di-Pertuan Agong (Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin, who is also the Terengganu Ruler).

Did you update Najib (about the matter)?

Amhari: No, I only updated Azlin.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He was charged under Section 23(1) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Act, punishable under Section 24(1) of the same law.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

The trial continues under High Court judge Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah in the afternoon.

12. Education Ministry lodges MACC report over contractors' false bank statements

PUTRAJAYA (Bernama): The Education Ministry has lodged a report with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) against some of its contractors said to have secured a total of 793 contracts after allegedly submitting false bank statements during the tender process.

The 793 contracts covered tenders for the ministry's cooked food supply (BMB), building and area cleanliness (KBK) and security control services (PKK).

The Education Minister's Special Duties officer Ulya Aqamah Husamuddin, when met at MACC headquarters here Friday (Sept 13), said the contracts took effect on Jan 1 this year.

He said on Aug 6, the ministry issued termination notices to 16 BMB contractors, identified to have falsified bank statements when submitting their bids, adding that similar notices will be issued to other contractors in stages.

On March 19, the ministry issued a reminder to all contractors that those caught falsifying or amending documents with the intention of cheating will be reported to the MACC.

13. Lodge a report if unaware of RM450mil project approval letter, Guan Eng told



MCA president Datuk Seri Wee Ka Siong

KUALA LUMPUR: Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng should lodge a report to the authorities if he is unaware about an alleged approval letter that is being spread on social media involving a RM450mil project that was awarded through direct negotiation.

MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong said the second paragraph of the letter issued to the Finance Ministry's contractor, showed that the Finance Minister had agreed to it.

"If the Finance Minister is not aware of the letter, he immediately needs to lodge a report to the police or the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission.

"This is a serious mismanagement and abuse of power. If the Finance Ministry does not lodge any report, it is hard for him to convince the public and continue to lead," said Dr Wee in a Facebook post on Monday (Sept 16).

He added that such a practice, should the letter be genuine, was in contrast to Pakatan Harapan's election promise to adopt open tendering "extensively and transparently".

Dr Wee said: "To those who are familiar with the Finance Ministry's standard operating procedure, they will surely understand that it is a normal procedure when a letter is signed by a high-ranking

officer from the government's procurement section with the title Datuk, on behalf of the Treasury secretary-general.

"Will Lim blame the media again for posting fake report? Or will he blame the previous government for implementing direct negotiation?"

"And will he will continue to deny or claims to be unaware about the statement made by Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Amiruddin Hamzah in Parliament on Oct 30 last year that direct negotiation will be allowed, under its (ministry's) five terms," said the Ayer Hitam MP.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's on Sunday (Sept 15) night said that he would look into the allegation of an approval letter bearing the ministry's letterhead for a direct negotiation for the project.

Dr Mahathir said he has never approved any new direct negotiations since taking over Putrajaya last year.

The letter, dated July 26, was said to have been faxed to a senior officer in the Prime Minister's Department, claiming it was referring to a letter sent by the Prime Minister on July 9.

The letter claimed that the Finance Minister had agreed for a company to be appointed through direct negotiation to construct a "Bangunan Gunasama Persekutuan Kota Baru" with the price of RM450mil.

An officer from the government's procurement section signed the letter.

In response, Malay Mail reported that Lim had denied signing the letter and added he would discuss the matter with Dr Mahathir first.

14. 1MDB trial: Jho Low dropped big names in TIA board proposal, High Court told



KUALA LUMPUR: Fugitive financier Low Taek Jho (pic) had dropped several big names of those he purportedly planned to bring in to sit on the board of advisors of the Terengganu Investment Authority (TIA) and also on the board of trustees of the TIA foundation, the High Court here heard.

Lawyer Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, who is representing Datuk Seri Najib Razak, revealed the high profile names during cross examination of a key witness on the eighth day of the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) trial on Tuesday (Sept 17).

He said among those "suggested" for TIA's board of advisors were Kuwait's former deputy prime minister Sheikh Mohammad Sabah Al-Salem, LVMH Moët Hennessy - Louis Vuitton SE chairman and CEO Bernard Arnault, former ExxonMobil chairman and CEO Lee Raymond, former General Electric CEO Jeffrey Immelt and former Walt Disney CEO Michael Eisner.

As for the TIA foundation, Low proposed Jordan's Queen Rania Al-Abdullah, U2 lead vocalist Bono and Najib's wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

They were said to be among those that Low planned to bring in to sit on both boards that would be chaired by then Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin.

Muhammad Shafee, was referring to an appendix in a letter dated May 4, 2009, by former 1MDB CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi, while questioning Najib's former special officer Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin.

Amhari told the High Court the high profile individuals were suggested by Low in one of the their meetings.

He added the meeting was also attended by Najib's former principal private secretary, the late Datuk Seri Azlin Alias at Prince Hotel.

Shafee suggested that the names were given to impress the Terengganu authorities to which Amhari said he did not know.

Shafee: Do you know whether these came to be true or not, whether they became members of the board?

Amhari: I don't know

Shafee: I put it to you that in reality, most of these personalities do not even know their names were being used.

Amhari: I don't know

Shafee: It didn't cross your mind at all that this was a set up for another con job?

Amhari: No

During the proceedings earlier, Amhari had initially disagreed with Shafee's suggestion that 1MDB was never Najb's "baby" but that of Sultan Mizan's but he then agreed with Shafee after being shown a series of documents, including the declassified Cabinet meeting minutes.

He also agreed to Shafee's suggestion that Low had shown interest in TIA, which eventually became 1MDB, from the very beginning.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He was charged with the four abuse of power charges under Section 23(1) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) Act, punishable under Section 24(1) of the same law.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher if found guilty.

15. Amhari denies defence's suggestion he was protecting Jho Low



KUALA LUMPUR: A former special officer to Datuk Seri Najib Razak has denied he protected Low Taek Jho during the early stages of 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) before it was federalised from Terengganu Investment Authority (TIA).

Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin was bombarded with multiple questions during cross-examination by Najib's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah.

Shafee suggested Amhari was protecting Low by not raising the issue of Low's misrepresentation as the advisor of Terengganu ruler Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin, who was then the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

He also suggested that Amhari kept quiet because he was close to Low and benefited from doing so.

Shafee raised a document of a meeting on June 30, 2009 at 5.30pm at one of the Parliament committee room, chaired by then Treasury secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Wan Abdul Aziz Abdullah, attended by Amhari, former 1MDB president and CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi, representatives from Menteri Besar Incorporated (MBI) Terengganu and a real representative of Sultan Mizan, among others.

Shafee: Can you look at the caption of Istana Negara's views, where the representative questioned who and what is Jho Low's role, and that a certain party is concerned that some might be misusing the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's name. Correct?

Amhari: Correct.

Shafee: Did you contribute with this discussion? You know Jho Low since 2007 or 2008 and he has made certain representations. Did you contribute to this discussion?

Amhari: No. Can I explain?

Shafee: Now you want to explain?

Amhari: Yes, during the TIA set up, I was considered to be a junior officer and my attendance which represented Najib, be it as the deputy prime minister or prime minister, was to show that the matter was within his knowledge that time. My role was very minimal because I was a very junior officer. I felt I was invited by Wan Abdul Aziz as a mark of respect to the prime minister's office.

I did not have any comments in all the TIA meetings I attended because they see me as a junior. I am not that qualified so I did not say anything at all.

Shafee: You have info in you that Jho Low claims to you, which is a claim to the PMO that he is an advisor to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong. Specific information. Don't you think it's incumbent to prevent further misleading information from going on?

Amhari: The way I look at it, it was already being discussed by more senior officers and that has been established.

Shafee then pressed Amhari further, asking him if he did not realise the matter was serious, to which Amhari replied he was sure the Treasury secretary-general would raise the matter with the prime minister.

Shafee then said Amhari had a jaundiced way of looking at the issue as he did not look at the proper perspective.

Shafee: I'd say that in the meeting you should've contributed to the content on who is Jho Low, which you fail to. I put it to you that you fail to do so as the only representative of the PMO.

Amhari: I don't believe it's necessary because the issue is out there and as a junior officer, we follow the instructions of senior officers from the MOF and how they will bring this problem to the minister or prime minister.

16. 1MDB trial: Najib had power to create instability in my life, says witness



Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin.

KUALA LUMPUR: A former special officer said that a prime minister would have the power and influence to create "instability" in his life, the High Court heard.

Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin, 43, testified that although his former boss Datuk Seri Najib Razak had never personally threatened him as the nation's number one man, the former premier had the power to do so.

The witness was under a re-examination by lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram in the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) trial here on Thursday (Sept 19).

Sri Ram: When you were asked about threats, you said "with respect to my former boss". What did you mean by that?

Amhari: There is no personal threat by Najib, definitely not, but as a prime minister... a prime minister would have all the necessary power to at least create some instability. I'm being very polite here.

Sri Ram: Instability in what?

Amhari: In my livelihood, my job.

The witness added that a prime minister "would have the power to do things" and his supporters can take matters into their own hands.

Sri Ram: And by prime minister, who are you referring to?

Amhari: Najib.

Earlier, on the same issue of threats, Sri Ram had asked the witness to explain himself.

"I think for the threats in my life right now... what I'm trying to express is that in whatever I do, the threat is always there.

"I consider myself stuck in the middle. When I was asked about the threats (during cross-examination), to me it doesn't matter whatever route I take, there will be threats.

"What I do is I look back at my religion and tell the truth. I hope that would save me," Amhari said.

Sri Ram then asked Amhari where were the threats from.

"It can be any stakeholders in this trial, whoever they are. Whatever group they are," the witness replied.

Sri Ram: One of the stakeholders is the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission. Do you include them?

Amhari: No.

The lead prosecutor then pressed further for Amhari to explain the other stakeholders he meant but the witness appeared hesitant.

Sri Ram: Who are the other stakeholders?

Amhari: Whether they... (the witness' voice trailed off)

Sri Ram: Don't be afraid. Nobody is going to touch you here.

Amhari: Whether the current ruling government or the previous ruling government.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher if found guilty.

The hearing continues before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah on Tuesday (Sept 24).

17. 1MDB trial: Defence accuses Amhari of working with Jho Low from the start



KUALA LUMPUR: The defence and a witness for the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) trial clashed at the High Court here when the witness was accused of working with fugitive financier Low Taek Jho to defraud 1MDB.

Datuk Seri Najib Razak's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah accused Najib's former special officer Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin of being involved in the entire 1MDB spectacle.

"In fact, you were working hand-in-hand with Jho Low from the very beginning.

"This is why the Prime Minister was kept misinformed by you and Jho Low, acting in tandem," said Shafee, to which Amhari denied.

Shafee said Amhari maneuvered his way for Najib to send him to Abu Dhabi to cover up the "rotten smell" of the dealings with the International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC).

He also accused Amhari of being told by the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) to implicate Najib as much as possible, in return for a favour by the MACC not to charge him.

Shafee also said Amhari owned the "fake" Aabar Investments PJS Ltd (BVI) which was held by Tycoon Game, which Shafee said was the "same person" as Amhari.

Shafee: I want to round it up: You are aware of this, you are actively concealing this from, not just from us, even from the MACC. You were actively concealing your involved hands in this entire 1MDB spectacle.

I'm putting it to you that in fact, you were working hand-in-hand with Jho Low from the very beginning. This is why your own boss, the prime minister, was kept misinformed by you and Jho Low acting in tandem.

Amhari: I disagree.

Shafee: Now that I've shown your connection with Aabar, which is what DoJ says (about) the fake Aabar. You are the owner of fake Aabar, that's why you organised with Jho Low, volunteered to go to Abu Dhabi so that this "rotten smell" would not come out. The prime minister would not know. Went there, negotiate, so that this matter is taken out of arbitration.

Of course the prime minister gave you instructions and say "Try to get this no longer a litigation. Let's negotiate". But you volunteered to do this, manoeuvred your way to do this, so that you can conceal this aspect of your involvement through Aabar.

Amhari: I disagree.

Shafee: And that's how, this lady Jasmine Loo, Loo Ai Swan, is not implicated with Jho Low. And now that things are not as sweet as before, she sues your company, which is Tycoon Gain in British Virgin Islands because she wanted back her share in another company that you were holding in trust for her.

Amhari: I don't know that.

Shafee: I'm saying this because you are not involved only with Jho Low, (but) with the whole gang.

18. MyKad syndicate: More NRD officers to be detained, says IGP



GEORGE TOWN (Bernama): Several more Penang National Registration Department (NRD) personnel will be detained to facilitate investigations into the issuance and sale of birth certificates and identity cards to foreign nationals.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Bador said the department had identified several officers believed to be involved in the syndicate and they would be detained in the second phase of arrest.

"They are from the same syndicate nabbed earlier. Following further investigations, more have been identified and would be detained in the next phase.

"Bukit Aman Criminal Investigation Department director Datuk Huzir Mohamed will release a statement," he told reporters here Friday (Sept 20).

On Sept 11, it was reported that police arrested 20 individuals including a NRD officer on suspicion of being involved in the illegal issuance and sale of birth certificates and identity cards.

The following day, six men, including a Penang NRD assistant director aged between 34 and 66, were charged in court on 32 counts related to the issuance and sale of birth certificates and identity cards to foreigners.

Meanwhile, Abdul Hamid said an inquest would be conducted to investigate the death of three men believed to have been involved in an armed robbery.

The three were killed in an exchange of fire with police at KM 22, Jalan Rawang, near Gombak, early Sept 14.

He said police would submit all information available for the inquest decision.

"People are making all kinds of comments relating to the case on social media. An inquest will be conducted soon and there is nothing to hide," he said.

19. S'wak trio under police probe over misuse of co-op funds, CBT charges likely



SAC Khalil with one of the 16 vehicles seized.

KUCHING: Police are investigating three suspects for allegedly embezzling RM3.4mil in federal funds meant for a cooperative in Sarawak.

Bukit Aman IGP secretariat anti-money laundering division chief SAC Datuk Khalil Azlan Chik said 57 more individuals and eight entities were also being investigated under the Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proceeds of Unlawful Activities Act (Amlatfpuaa) in connection with the case.

In addition, police have frozen bank accounts and seized assets worth a total RM6.2mil in their investigations so far.

SAC Khalil said police raided six premises around Kuching belonging to the suspects on Aug 22 and seized assets believed to have been unlawfully obtained.

"We also froze 71 bank accounts totalling RM2.95mil," he told a press conference at state Commercial CID headquarters here on Friday (Sept 20).

SAC Khalil said funds totalling RM7.5mil were channelled from the Cooperatives Commission of Malaysia to Koperasi Automobil Kuching Sarawak Bhd (Kokas) in stages, starting May 2012, to carry out automotive workshop modernisation and retail shop transformation programmes in the state.

"Between 2012 and December 2017, three suspects comprising the chairman, secretary and treasurer of Kokas were found to have misused RM3.4mil of the funds.

"An investigation under Section 409 of the Penal Code commenced on Sept 21 last year," he said.

On June 26 this year, a follow-up investigation was carried out under Amlatfpuaa against 57 people and eight entities believed to be involved in proceeds of unlawful activities.

Police are continuing to trace the money and investigate the seized and frozen assets under Section 4(1) of AMLATFPUAA, added SAC Khalil.

He also said the three suspects were likely to face criminal breach of trust charges under Section 409 of the Penal Code.

20. Ex-adviser of entrepreneur jailed for CBT

ALOR SETAR: A former personal adviser of a renowned herbal product entrepreneur has been sentenced to five years' jail and fined RM90,000 in default of two years' jail by the Sessions Court here.

Judge Azman Abu Hassan handed down the sentence on Abdullah Sani Ismail, 64, who used to work for Datuk Dr Che Rozmey Che Din, after finding him guilty of three counts of criminal breach of trust (CBT).

Abdullah Sani was ordered to serve the jail sentence from yesterday. He was spared the cane due to his age.

The court, however, allowed a stay of the jail sentence pending an appeal, but ordered him to pay the fine.

Abdullah Sani was charged with committing CBT involving rental payments of a property in Bukit Mertajam, Penang, which was entrusted to him by Che Rozmey.

The payments involved RM97,000, RM88,000 and RM61,600 between September 2014 and July 8, 2016. The offences were committed at the Herba Prima Marketing office in Bandar Darulaman Jaya, Jitra.

The Deputy Public Prosecutor was Nabilah Md Ruslan while Badrol Hisham Abdullah represented Abdullah Sani.

21. Najib had ultimate power in 1MDB decisions, court told



Former 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) president and CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi (left) walking to the High Court.

KUALA LUMPUR: Former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had "ultimate power" in decisions involving the finances of 1Malaysia Development Bhd or its earlier entity, Terengganu Investment Authority Bhd (TIA).

Former 1MDB CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi, 49, told the High Court that as the number one man in the country, Najib had the ultimate power to make decisions on big investments, funds and national policies.

"This is in accordance with Article 117 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association (M&A) which stated that any action must have written permission from the prime minister.

"At the level of the board of directors, we are subjected to always report and ask for the opinion and mandate from the prime minister before making any big decisions," he said.

Shahrol added that the power to appoint the board of directors (BOD) and the board of advisors (BOA) fell under the absolute power of the prime minister.

For decisions that needed immediate action, Shahrol said he would go to fugitive financier Low Taek Jho, who was the unofficial adviser of TIA and 1MDB for Low to obtain the advice of Najib.

TIA was set up as a sovereign wealth fund on Feb 27, 2009, and later changed its name to 1MDB on Sept 25 the same year.

Shahrol was in an examination-in-chief conducted by lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram here on Tuesday (Sept 24).

Sri Ram had referred the witness to 1MDB's M&A document which was amended during an extraordinary general meeting on Aug 11,2009.

The witness said the M&A was prepared based on a discussion by several individuals including himself and Low at the beginning of TIA.

The amendment in the document confirmed that the highest power in 1MDB was that of the prime minister, as well as the change in TIA's ownership to the Federal Government through the Ministry of Finance Inc (MOF Inc).

"I remember Low (better known as Jho Low) ordered for the words "Federal Government of Malaysia" to be changed to "Prime Minister" in the amendment because Low said Najib wanted to make sure there was no ambiguity," he added.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

Shahrol will continue his testimony before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah on Wednesday (Sept 25).

22. Ex-1MDB chief: RM2.93bil loaned to Jho Low's company without my approval



Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak at the Kuala Lumpur Courts Complex.

KUALA LUMPUR: An executive director of 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), who is currently at large, went behind his boss's back by signing an agreement between 1MDB and Good Star Ltd, involving a US\$700mil (RM2.93bil) loan repayment.

The High Court heard from former 1MDB CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi, 49, that he had never permitted Tang Keng Chee, or Casey Tang, to sign any agreements with Good Star, a company that belonged to fugitive financier Low Taek Jho.

The witness, who was being questioned conducted by lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram, said this when he was referred to an investment management agreement between Good Star and 1MDB dated Sept 29, 2009.

"This document involved Good Star and 1MDB but I never knew about this and I had never ordered Casey to sign any agreements with Good Star.

"Casey was only given the mandate to manage Foreign Exchange Transaction with Deutsche Bank (Malaysia) Bhd for a US\$1bil (RM4.18bil) transaction through a director's circular resolution (DCR) dated Sept 26, 2009," he said.

The witness also confirmed that for as long as he was the CEO of 1MDB, there was never a business transaction conducted with Good Star.

"I confirmed that this agreement was never presented in any of the board of directors meetings.

"I have never received or seen this document before this," he added.

The witness said he later realised that Low had handed over the fake investment management agreement, which was signed by Tang, to a private banking company RBS Coutts.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

Shahrol will continue his testimony before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah on Wednesday (Sept 25).

23. 'Jho Low and Najib blocked audit'



KUALA LUMPUR: An audit on 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) in 2010 would have revealed that the troubled sovereign wealth fund had transferred US\$700mil (RM2.9bil) to Good Star Ltd, a company owned and controlled by Low Taek Jho.

But Low and Datuk Seri Najib Razak did not allow this to happen as the National Audit Department was essentially not authorised to conduct an audit and due diligence on 1MDB.

Ernst & Young, one of the Big Four accounting firms, was appointed instead on the recommendation of Low's close associate Casey Tang.

Testifying before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah during cross examination by lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram, former 1MDB CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi (pic) said Low told him that an audit by the National Audit Department could present a political risk to Najib.

Low, popularly known as Jho Low, instructed Shahrol to draft a letter dated Dec 11, 2009 to Najib on Najib's request to ensure 1MDB did not have to be audited.

The letter was copied to then Auditor-General Tan Sri Ambrin Buang, then Treasury secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Wan Abdul Aziz Wan Abdullah and 1MDB board chairman Tan Sri Che Lodin Wok Kamaruddin.

"The letter stated that the takeover of Terengganu Investment Authority (TIA) to become 1MDB was done on an 'as is where is' basis, and due to that it would not have to be audited or have due diligence to be conducted by the National Audit Department anymore.

"I was not involved in the initial discussions about this. But I believe the content of the letter was discussed earlier between Jho Low and Najib.

"Based on what I know now, I'm confident that the takeover of TIA to 1MDB on that basis was planned by Jho Low with the blessings of Najib to hide his misappropriation during the issuance of the RM5bil Islamic Medium Term Notes with government guarantee in May 2009," Shahrol told the High Court.

"The audit into 1MDB would have revealed that US\$1bil was invested into its joint venture with PetroSaudi International (PSI), out of which only US\$300mil went into the JV company and US\$700mil went into Good Star Ltd, which at that time was purportedly a subsidiary of PSI."

After learning that the audit could present a political risk to Najib, Shahrol said he sought further advice on what to do next.

Sri Ram: From who?

Shahrol: From the shareholder i.e. Najib via Jho Low.

Sri Ram: So you asked Jho Low to get the accused's views on this?

Shahrol: To tell us what to do.

Sri Ram: What was the message that came back?

Shahrol: That there is no need for due diligence or audit exercises as we are appointing or already appointed Ernst & Young and we will submit the audited report to MoF Inc once ready.

Sri Ram: Now what was the reason to copy the letter to the Auditor-General?

Shahrol: I was advised to copy the letter to the Auditor-General (interrupted)...

Sri Ram: By whom?

Shahrol: By Jho Low. To ensure the Auditor-General knows the decision of the board chaired by the prime minister and that there was no audit required.

A letter from Najib to Shahrol dated Dec 22, 2009 stated that the former agreed with the decision of the 1MDB board of directors that the company should be audited by professional external auditors appointed by the board and there was no need for the Auditor-General to audit 1MDB.

The National Audit Department wrote to 1MDB in October 2010, requesting for additional documents involved in the audit to determine 1MDB's contingent liabilities.

Meanwhile, the High Court also heard that a meeting held at Najib's house in Jalan Langgak Duta on the evening of Oct 16,2009 was to formalise minutes of a meeting that was pre-prepared by Low.

Shahrol also said that Low was far more effective at setting up a meeting with Najib as compared to Najib's own officers.

He added that on Sept 16,2009, the deliberate issuance of shareholder minutes by Najib was to protect himself from any allegations of misappropriation, and to place full responsibility on the board of directors.

Shahrol said he only realised this when investigations into 1MDB were exposed.

The High Court was also told that the name 1MDB was initially not allowed by the Companies Commission of Malaysia due to controlled words, but a letter of support from Najib pushed this through.

24. Man arrested in SibU for trying to bribe GOF, MACC raiding team with RM15,000



SIBU: A man has been arrested for trying to bribe a General Operations Force (GOF) raiding team with RM15,000 to not take action against him for allegedly possessing 726 cartons of smuggled cigarettes.

10th Batallion GOF Commander Supt Sanudin Mohamad Isa said the arrest happened when an officer went to a house in Taman Mayfair in Sri Aman at 9.32am on Friday (Sept 27) accompanied by three Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) officers.

He said a man in his 50s showed up at the gate and added that the man allowed them into the house where they found the smuggled cigarettes worth RM132,660 in a back room of the house.

Supt Sanudin added that the suspect tried to negotiate with the team to let him off the hook, saying that he took out RM15,000 to bribe them.

He then said that when the team refused, the man insisted they take the money.

"The man was immediately arrested and the money and a van were also seized from him," said Supt Sanudin.

The case is being investigated under the Customs Act 1967 and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Act.

25. Jho Low 'controlled 1MDB from behind,' court told



KUALA LUMPUR: Fugitive financier Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low, "controlled 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) from behind" and used confidential emails, the High Court here heard.

Former 1MDB CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi said this when testifying at the 1MDB trial of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak here on Monday (Sept 30).

He was asked about an email received from Jho Low - dealrainman1@gmail.com - which was a forwarded email from taiko_besar72@gmail.com. It was sent to Shahrol's email address of shahrol@gmail.com at 9.50pm on Feb 6, 2013.

The title of the forwarded email was "FWD: US6B NOTES, ETC" with attachments of "CATALYSE ANNEX LETTER AND 5 FEBRUARY 2013 - UPDATES FOR YAB PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA".

"I received this email from Low. It explained the proposal for a letter of comfort from the Finance Ministry in order to secure a US\$6bil loan needed for the joint venture (JV) between Aabar Investment PJS and 1MDB," said Shahrol.

He said this during the examination-in-chief conducted by lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram.

Shahrol said the email was an example of confidential emails by Low, who "controlled 1MDB from behind".

However, it was not explained who owned the taiko_besar72@gmail.com email address.

"This email contained the draft of an annexe letter and an explanatory note to Najib. The annexe letter contained the details of negotiations between 1MDB and Aabar," he added.

"This email clearly showed that Jho had arranged everything and it was within Najib's knowledge because he (Najib) had minuted my letter to expedite the matter despite it being common knowledge that it was not easy to obtain a letter of support (LOS) from the government," the witness added.

Shahrol was referring to an LOS from the Finance Ministry to 1MDB Global Investment Ltd dated March 14, 2013.

The LOS written in support of 1MDB in the issuance of US\$3bil in bonds was issued just two days after 1MDB and Aabar inked their JV on March 12, 2013.

The JV was meant for investments in the property sector in Abu Dhabi and the Tun Razak Exchange.

In earlier testimony on Monday, the court heard from Shahrol that it was impossible for the Finance Ministry to issue the LOS in such a short span of time without the direct interference from Najib.

According to Shahrol, Low had fixed the fund amount at US\$6bil by way of a 50:50 JV whereby 1MDB would have to inject half of the JV value at US\$3bil.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

26. Najib 'bulldozed' his way to get a ministerial letter of support for 1MDB, court told



Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak "bulldozed" his way to get a ministerial letter to support the issuance of US\$3bil in bonds in relation to a joint venture (JV) between 1MDB and Aabar Investment PJS, the High Court here heard.

In his testimony, former 1MDB CEO Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi said that fugitive financier Low Taek Jho - better known as Jho Low - had told him this when he questioned whether the Finance Ministry would be able to issue the letter of support (LOS) in time.

"Jho Low had told me that the 'boss will bulldoze, don't worry', which meant that Najib, as the (then) finance minister and prime minister, would ensure that the LOS would be issued in the nearest time," said the ninth witness in Najib's 1MDB trial.

Shahrol said this during the examination-in-chief conducted by lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram here on Monday (Sept 30).

Sri Ram then showed the witness a letter, which was the LOS from the Finance Ministry to 1MDB Global Investment Ltd dated March 14, 2013.

The LOS was issued just two days after 1MDB and Aabar inked their deal on March 12, 2013, and their JV was aimed for investments in the property sector in Abu Dhabi and the Tun Razak Exchange.

In his testimony, Shahrol said it was impossible for the Finance Ministry to issue the LOS in such a short span of time without direct interference from Najib.

"Najib then made a note for the ministry's action and for the ministry to issue the LOS to guarantee the issuance of US\$3bil in bonds," Shahrol said.

He also said that Low had fixed the fund amount at US\$6bil by way of a 50:50 JV whereby 1MDB would have to inject half of the JV value at US\$3bil.

"The same day I put down my signature on the letter, Najib minuted the Treasury secretary-general to take immediate action. This shows how Najib wanted this matter to be handled immediately," he added.

Najib, 66, faces 25 charges in total - four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him financial benefit to the tune of RM2.3bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

He faces imprisonment of up to 20 years and a fine of up to five times the sum or value of the gratification or RM10,000, whichever is higher, if found guilty.