

Justo surprised by 3-year sentence, wants to appeal
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Former PetroSaudi International Ltd (PSI) executive Xavier Andre Justo said he intends to appeal his three-year sentence in Thailand for attempted blackmail.

Justo, in an interview with Singapore's The Straits Times, said the sentence on Aug 17 surprised him as he had expected lighter punishment for cooperating with the Thai authorities.

"I wasn't expecting three years," he was quoted telling the English daily in Bangkok at the remand prison Klong Prem, in the presence of his lawyer.

He is reportedly looking for a new lawyer to represent him, and has up till Sept 17 to file his appeal.

Justo is serving his sentence for attempting to blackmail his former employer, a business partner of the scandal-ridden 1MDB, with data stolen from the company before he quit.

In the interview, the Swiss national said he does not know if the evidence of his WhatsApp chat has been passed on to the Malaysian police, who are trying to secure evidence related to the 1MDB scandal.

The government claims data procured by Justo had been tampered with by whistleblower website Sarawak Report to damage the debt-ridden sovereign fund's reputation.

No idea of file contents

Sarawak Report editor Clare Rewcastle-Brown has however denied the allegations and have challenged the authorities to show proof of the alleged tampering.

Justo in an earlier interview with The Straits Times on July 23 claimed Rewcastle-Brown and others involved in his attempted sale of the stolen data had allegedly planned to "modify" the data.

The Edge, one of the interested buyers, have however claimed that they had posed as buyers to lure Justo into revealing the data.

The Straits Times in today's report however, the Swiss claimed he had no idea of the contents of the files he was attempting to sell.

"I am not a whistleblower," Justo was quoted saying.

"It would be easy to be seen in that image, but I am not. They (the buyers) had a political agenda that I didn't know (about).

"I had no idea what was in those files. I didn't know they were trying to bring down a government. I was stupid," he claimed.

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