



**Witness: S'wak CM not involved in sacking GM**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**September 23, 2010**

The executive chairperson of the Hornbill Skyways Sdn Bhd, told the Industrial Court today that Chief Minister Abdul Taib Mahmud was not involved in the termination of its former general manager's services.

Aidan Wing, 66, the company's executive director at that time, said the firm was run by an independent board of directors and its officers.

"The chief minister is not involved in the affairs of the company or in the decision making process as the company is run by an independent board of directors," he told the court.

Wing (*left*) said the board allegedly received numerous complaints that the claimant (Mohamed Asharat Ramzan Ali) was spreading baseless allegations of mismanagement, fraud and irregularities in the company's affairs.

"He even bypassed my authority and approached the then chairperson directly in making these allegations.

"He wrote a letter to the then chairperson for approval to set-up a panel to investigate the purchase of the helicopter," he said.

The witness who was the second called by the company said, the then chairperson, Bujang Mohd Nor was agreeable to the setting-up of the panel.

He, however, was not sure whether the panel set-up to probe the improper purchase of a Bell helicopter ever came into existence, as there were no documents to confirm it.

There was a purchase but this had been approved by the Board which was not possible without its approval, he added.

"There is also another baseless allegation regarding the purchase of the Citation X aircraft.

The claimant was making false allegations against the then company chairperson and personnel that commission was paid. There was none but the sales allowance which he claimed was in fact a discount for the purchase," he said.

Wing was testifying in Asharat's unlawful dismissal claim which he filed after serving four months with the company between March 15, and July 13, 2005.

The 48 year-old is seeking reinstatement without loss of salary, benefits, entitlements or privileges at RM18,200 per month calculated up to the last date of hearing.

The case is said to provide an insight into alleged mishandling in the Sarawak -owned company, which is/was a subject of Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission probe.

MACC investigations

Wing also told the court he was aware that Asharat had levelled serious allegations of corruption against the company but they were not true.

"I have been handling the portfolio for four years before Asharat was appointed and till now, there had been no such allegations."

He, however, agreed an investigation was carried out by the MACC into the company's accounts.

Like yesterday's witness former director Len Talif Salleh, Wing asserted the investigations began on April 2009, and in April this year the commission reportedly closed the case.

Wing claimed the investigations was based on an alleged complaint by Asharat.

However, theSun daily yesterday reported a probe was being made in the purchase of two aircraft, in the wake of new evidence received by MACC deputy commissioner Shukri Abdull.

The report quoted sources as saying that the company had ordered a Citation X jet worth over RM70 million in 2005. However, it alleged that the purchase did not follow set financial procedures.

TheSun also said that the MACC is investigating claims that the agreement for a bank loan of RM45 million had been signed by a lower-ranking company personnel.

Distorted reporting

Earlier, lawyer Prakash Menon, who appeared for Hornbill Skyways complained to court chairperson Ahmad Rosle Mohd Sham, about the daily's purported distorted reporting.

Citing certain paragraphs from the article, Prakash claimed it could have been done to misled the readers.

He went on to ask Rosle, as he did yesterday to bar reporters from covering the trial for what he claims his worry over the media "sensationalising" the case, or for the chairperson to issue a warning.

Rosle, however, said he did not want to say there was gross intention to misreport the case, as alleged.

"I want to remind the press to be fair in its reporting and promise to take up the matter again if the situation persists or gets worse."

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.  
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/143447>