

Umno leaders admit to receiving funds from Najib

Padang Serai Umno leader says the amount was not reflected in the official account to bypass AGM and not be assessed by auditors

by RAHIMI YUNUS

THE sixth day of Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak's SRC International Sdn Bhd trial yesterday saw Umno leaders testifying that they had received funds from the former prime minister (PM).

The prosecutor's ninth witness, Padang Serai Umno division chief Datuk Asmadi Abu Talib, told the High Court that he received a RM50,000 cheque from Najib by hand after he was chosen to be Kedah's Merbau Pulas candidate in the last general election.

Asked why the amount was not reflected in Padang Serai Umno's official account, Asmadi said it would allow the division administration to manage it directly.

"If it involves Umno (account), it has to go through the AGM and get assessed by the auditors," said Asmadi.

He told the court that Najib issued the cheque on Feb 12, 2015.

According to him, the RM50,000 fund was used for the division's programmes involving schools and non-governmental organisations, among others.

Similarly, Johor Baru Umno secretary Abu Talib Alias testified that he received a RM300,000 cheque issued by Najib to the party's official account.

Abu Talib, who is also the prosecutor's 10th witness, said he had received the cheque from Najib's late principle secretary Datuk Azlin Alias at the PM's Office in Putrajaya.

Abu Talib, however, said the amount was insufficient compared to the annual expenditure that usually hit RM600,000 a year.

The proceeding also heard from the 11th prosecution witness, Abdul Munir Othman of Tanjung Semarak Sdn Bhd, who is one of the trustees of Rumah Penyangang Tun Abdul Razak — an orphanage in Pekan, Pahang.

Abdul Munir, who was awarded contracts for the National Service Training Department, testified that

monies from the RM400,000 cheque received from Najib were used to fund the orphanage's daily operations including the kids' school and food expenses.

The 12th prosecution witness — Manisah Othman — testified that she received a RM13,800 cheque from Najib on Feb 12, 2015, after Najib had verbally promised to take care of her sons' education welfare.

The officer at the Department of Statistics Malaysia lost her husband, Amirudin Mohd Baria in 2013, who was Najib's former secretary during his tenure as the education minister and the deputy PM.

The prosecution's eighth witness, Daud Muhammad, a contractor who operates a civil construction company named Syadilah Enterprise, testified that the RM77,300 cheque received on Feb 24, 2015, was a payment for two water tank towers constructed at Najib's official residence in Pekan, Pahang.

Meanwhile, the prosecution's fourth witness, Ahmad Farhan Sharifuddin, a manager at Bank Negara Malaysia, returned to the stand and testified that pen drives and two mobile phones that

belonged to the AmBank Group bank managers were confiscated during the raid in 2015.

Ahmad Farhan said the central bank forensics team was ordered to extract data from the devices and among the items acquired were the email correspondence between the managers and Low Taek Jho, known also as Jho Low."

Earlier in the proceeding, the prosecutor raised issues on the leaked court recording transcription (CRT) on social media and sought the undertaking from the defence not to give the trial recordings to any third parties.

CRT is provided to both the prosecutor and defence after formal applications were made.

Judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali ruled that the court will not prejudge the leaked CRT matter as the police investigation is ongoing.

He reminded that any recordings or CRT should not be circulated or uploaded in other outlets to avoid potential contempt of court.

Mohd Nazlan also warned that the court may stop supplying the CRT to both sides if transgression of the undertaking reoccurs.