

'JHO LOW ENJOYED GOOD TIES WITH ARAB ROYALTY'

He arranged my meetings with King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, says Najib

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DATUK Seri Najib Razak finally touched on his relationship with fugitive businessmen Low Taek Jho @ Jho Low and events leading up to the billions in donation from King Abdullah Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia, which ended up in his private banking accounts.

The much-awaited testimony on this contentious relationship between the duo was raised as Najib continued with his testimony under oath on the second day of his defence in the SRC International Bhd trial where he is accused of misappropriating RM42 million of the company's funds.

Najib said he first came to know Jho Low in 2007 when his stepson, Riza Aziz, introduced them.

He said Jho Low, a graduate of Wharton Business School in the United States, had become a successful entrepreneur at a young age with his own private invest-



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ment fund.

Low, he said, was later successful in working out a deal between the Arabs and a Khazanah National project in Iskandar Development.

"He was also involved in the takeover of the Utama Banking Group Bhd (UBG) with (former Sarawak chief minister) Tun Taib Mahmud's family.

"I later got to know that Low was also close to Sultan of Terengganu Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin."

He said Low eventually became a very influential person who had close relations with royalty and connected people in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

Low, he said, was able to arrange meetings with these people and this boosted his confidence in the businessman.

Asked by lawyer Wan Aizuddin Wan Mohammed what led him to believe that Low had influence



Datuk Seri Najib Razak arriving at the Kuala Lumpur Courts Complex yesterday. PIC BY MOHD KHAIRUL HELMY MOHD DIN

with the Saudi and UAE royal families, Najib said there were several incidents that influenced him.

He cited Low's ability to get a huge investment from Mubadala Development company, which is owned by the UAE, for the Iskandar Development region.

Najib said Low again proved himself in 2011 when he played an important role in getting the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, General Sheikh Mohammed Zayed Al Nahyan, to visit Malaysia.

"Low was also able to set up a meeting with Prince Turki of Saudi Arabia, which saw Malaysia Development Bhd (IMDB) enter into a joint venture with PetroSaudi in September 2009," he said.

Najib said Prince Turki, who was then the governor of Riyadh, was a favourite son of King Abdullah at that time.

"Prince Turki was also an impressive person as he was the squadron leader of the F15 jet fighters in Saudi Arabia.

"He, being the co-owner of PetroSaudi, strengthened my confidence in what they were telling me," he said.

Najib said it was also Low who arranged meetings between him and King Abdullah during sev-

eral of his visits to Riyadh and Jeddah.

"In 2010, before I went on an official visit to Saudi Arabia, Low told me that King Abdullah was very impressed with Malaysia's ability to maintain moderation and how we treated Muslims and non-Muslims equally.

"He said King Abdullah wanted to bestow on me the highest honour by presenting me with the King Abdulaziz Order of Merit (1st class).

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DATUK SERI NAJIB RAZAK

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Asked if this really happened, Najib replied in the affirmative and said he also managed to raise Malaysia-Saudi Arabia relations during his meeting with King Abdullah.

"King Abdullah expressed his concern about the rising threat of Islamic militants and

asked me to ensure Malaysia was free of such negative influences.

"King Abdullah gave me his assurance that he would give me all the support to ensure I could lead Malaysia and make it a model of a successful Islamic nation."

Najib said in 2010, Low told him that King Abdullah wanted to give him a personal donation but

he was not informed about the amount.

He said Low informed him that the donation would be handled by the king's son and that details would follow.

"I got a huge sum of money from 2011 to 2014 and I believed that this was the donation.

"Jho Low was the link man and I believed that he was the one handling all the donations for the Arab royalty. I also received several letters on this donations from Jho Low."

Asked if Jho Low had informed him about the exact amount, Najib said he was only told that it would be between US\$100 million and US\$200 million.

Najib said he knew the Saudi royalty could be generous and they had also donated huge sums to organisations like the Clinton Foundation in the US and countries like Egypt, Pakistan and Palestine.

He added that his confidence in Low was raised when King Abdullah raised the haj quota for Malaysia and assisted Malaysian students stranded during the Arab Spring uprising.

"Jho Low arranged for two aircraft to fly the students from Egypt to Jeddah.

"I also received the Qiswah cloth (the cloth which covers the entrance to the Kaabah)."

Najib, 66, is facing three counts of criminal breach of trust and one count of abuse of power over funds amounting to RM42 million linked to SRC International.

He is also facing three money laundering charges over the same funds. He faces up to 20 years' jail and a fine if convicted.

	SUBUH (am)	SYURUK	ZUHUR	ASAR (pm)	MAGHRIB	ISYAK
Melaka	5:40	7:02	1:04	4:27	7:03	8:17
Penang	5:53	7:13	1:11	4:33	7:05	8:19
K. Lumpur	5:53	7:04	1:06	4:29	7:04	8:18
Johor Bahru	5:33	6:55	12:58	4:21	6:58	8:12
Kuantan	5:38	7:00	1:01	4:24	6:58	8:13
Ipoh	5:49	7:08	1:09	4:31	7:04	8:19