

Jho Low was Najib's unofficial special adviser

> Court told he commanded extraordinary authority, carrying out various tasks

KUALA LUMPUR: A former special officer to Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak, Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin, 43, told the High Court yesterday that fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, also known as Jho Low, was Najib's unofficial special adviser.

Testifying in Najib's 1MDB trial yesterday, he said Jho Low carried out various behind-the-scene tasks for Najib, such as managing 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), international programmes, working visits, business proposals and policies.

He added that Jho Low also orchestrated investment dealings, inter-government negotiations, political and fund manoeuvres for

the former prime minister, and that all directives issued by Jho Low had to be carried out as he believed Jho Low 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. Datuk Azlin also informed me that Jho Low's instructions, once confirmed by Najib, must be followed," said Amhari, who was then with the Economics Division at the Prime Minister's (PM) Office.

On the third day of the trial yesterday, the eighth prosecution witness also said there were others in the PM's Office (then) who were at Jho Low's command. "He commanded extraordinary authority," Amhari said.

Special instructions involving confidential matters, which were given to Azlin and Amhari

by Jho Low, were known and agreed by Najib.

"I say that because most of the time, Datuk Azlin or I will check with Najib on the instructions given to us by Jho Low and we found that he was aware of the instructions, and at times, he agreed with the instructions given by Jho Low and ordered us to do it," Amhari said.

He also told the court Jho Low often told him that he had met with Najib's family many times and knew more about the family's plans than he did, as a special officer to Najib.

He also said the fugitive businessman frequently received calls from Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor and that Jho Low became very close to the family after befriending Najib's step son Riza Shahriz Abdul Aziz.

The information above was read out by Amhari during the examination-in-chief by deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib.

The hearing before justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues today. - Bernama