

'He had direct access to Najib'

> Jho Low able to influence decisions at the executive level, says witness

KUALA LUMPUR: Former 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) chief executive officer Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi revealed to the High Court yesterday that Low Taek Jho, or Jho Low, was close to Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak and had access to meet him either at his home in Jalan Langgak Duta or at Sri Satria Putrajaya, the official residence of the deputy prime minister, adding he requested for a "milo ais" as soon as he stepped into Najib's residence.

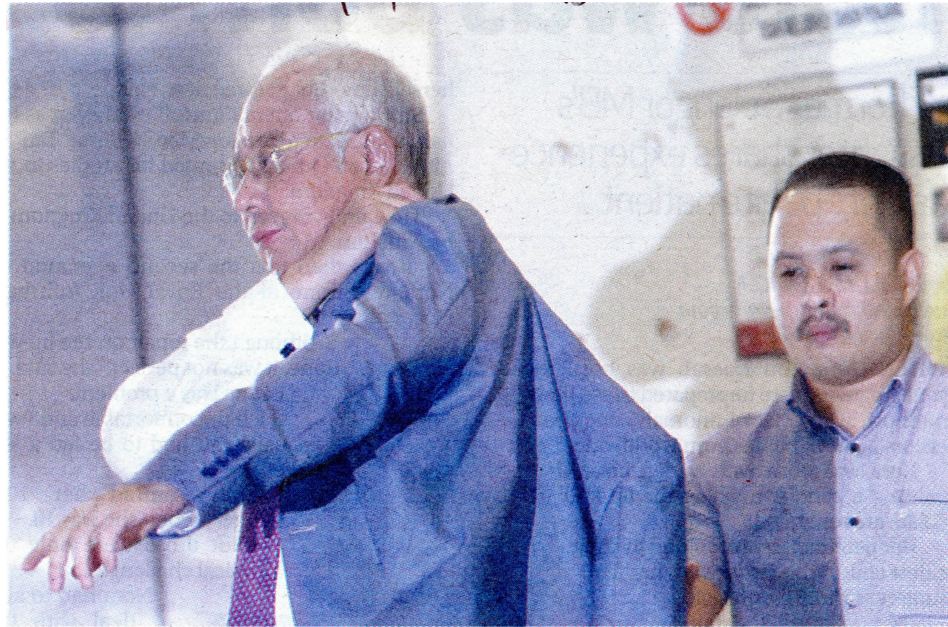
Shahrol Azral, 49, said he first found out about Low's close relationship with Najib, who was then deputy prime minister (DPM) and finance minister, when he joined the Terengganu Investment Authority Berhad (TIA) in 2009.

The ninth prosecution witness said this was based on certain factors, such as any action by Low in outlining directives from Najib, would be agreed to and approved by Najib himself.

He said he was convinced Najib had given Low the mandate to organise the operations of TIA and 1MDB from behind the scenes through talking points and action plans.

"I saw that he had direct access to Najib. For example, during TIA's BoD (board of directors) meeting he could contact Najib by phone for advice and guidance, and Low had access to meet with Najib at his house either at Jalan Langgak Duta in Kuala Lumpur or at Sri Satria Putrajaya, which was the official residence of the DPM.

"For example, in March 2009, Low had asked me to meet with Mubadala Petroleum's CEO at the official residence of



NAJIB'S 1MDB TRIAL

THE CHARGES

Accused **Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak**

Four charges of having used his positions to obtain gratification totalling **RM2.28bil in 1MDB funds** and 21 counts of **money laundering** involving the same money. He faces imprisonment of up to **20 years** and a fine of up to **five** times the sum or value of the gratification or **RM10,000**, whichever is higher, if found guilty.

THE JUDGE
Justice **Collin Lawrence Sequerah**

THE PROSECUTION TEAM
Led by **Datuk Seri Ganad Sri Ram**

THE DEFENCE TEAM
Led by **Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah**

Najib in Sri Satria. At that time, I clearly noticed that Low had direct access to Najib," he said when reading his witness statement.

The key prosecution witness said he met Low around 2007, while working as an

analyst at consulting firm Andersen Consulting, which was then known as Accenture.

The witness said that at the end of 2008, Low had contacted him, saying he was managing a fund involving a government body, and was also setting up a new fund.

"In my opinion, that was when Low assessed my character and personality - that I was someone who executed the client's instructions without asking a lot of questions," Shahrol said.

Najib, 66, is facing four charges of having used his positions to obtain gratification totalling RM2.3 billion in 1MDB funds and 21 counts of money laundering involving the same money.

The trial before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues.