

Najib escapes bid to restrict his movement

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KUALA LUMPUR: The prosecution asked for legal sanction on Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak but what the former prime minister got in the end was barely a rap on the knuckles.

According to Bernama, lead prosecutor Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram submitted an application yesterday for Najib to be sanctioned for attending the nomination process for the Tanjung Piai by-election on Nov 2.

Najib had called in sick on Oct 31, forcing an adjournment of his corruption trial until yesterday.

The court was shown pictures of Najib's eyes which were swollen.

Judge Collin Lawrence Sequerah warned that he will not tolerate any attempt to mislead the court and will not hesitate to punish acts of contempt.

However, the judge said he did not see a reason to impose sanctions on Najib.

Earlier, Sri Ram said the prosecution had received instructions from Attorney-General Tan Sri Tommy Thomas to seek the court's approval to restrict Najib within the Federal Territory and to require him to report to a police

station nearest to his home by 9am every Saturday.

He said Thomas had sought the sanction because he thought "it was miraculous that the eye problem could disappear" a short while after Thursday, and that Najib was able to travel to Johor.

"There was a public outcry and the public prosecutor received a number of complaints and that a police report was lodged by someone over the issue.

"We submit the accused is abusing his MC to obtain adjournment and prolong the trial.

"There must be a sanction on this utter contempt of court proceedings," Sri Ram said.

However, Najib's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah countered that Thomas did not do proper research.

He said the MC was only for a day and that Najib was able to go to Johor as the eye irritation subsided although there was still swelling.

Muhammad Shafee also challenged the person who lodged the police report to be brave enough to come before the court and lodge the complaint.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is in Bangkok attending the 35th Asean Summit, said he will not question the judge's decision.

"He (Najib) is given days off and he doesn't attend court but he can campaign in Tanjung Piai.

"We don't question the judges, they decide."

The hearing before Sequerah continues.

