

'Stop with the posts on Zeti'

Court warns Najib against making statements linked to trial

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak has been issued a stern warning by the High Court to not repeat his social media post on former Bank Negara governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz.

Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah, in his decision, said the former prime minister must not make statements relating to the trial "as if the trial is in the public domain".

The court heard submissions from both parties arising from the prosecution's application for Najib to be issued a warning on the matter.

"The statements that Zeti had made (in interviews) do not justify the accused in this case responding by way of his Facebook post.

"What the accused stated in his post can be viewed, as a whole, as an attack on the witness.

"The court therefore issues a stern warning not to repeat the action," said Justice Sequerah here yesterday.

He added that the court would take any action necessary to protect the integrity of the court.

Earlier, Najib's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah submitted that Najib's Facebook post was a response to Zeti's statements made in two articles that were published online.

"She continued to attack my client one day before his SRC International Sdn Bhd charging (July 4, 2018)," he added.

Shafee said Zeti's statements were recorded by the media



Stern warning:
Najib making his way to the High Court in Kuala Lumpur.

because she was a part of the 1MDB special task force which investigated the scandal involving the sovereign wealth fund.

(Other members of the task force were former attorney general Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail, former inspector-general of police Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar and former Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission chief commissioner Tan Sri Abu Kassim Mohamed).

He said that the court needed to be conscious of the citizens' right to freedom of speech under Article 10 of the Federal Constitution and whether the post was indeed contempt of court.

DPP Ahmad Akram Gharib said

one of the articles in question was from euromoney.com.

"It was an interview on the issue of economy. Nothing in this whole article amounts to a personal attack on Najib," he said.

The second article, in *The Edge*, was Zeti's response to a claim Najib made in a recent interview.

"She was responding to a statement made about her.

"She was not even listed as a witness at this point.

"This is a clear case of contempt. We move the court to give a warning so this does not happen again," he added.

On Tuesday, the prosecution made an application for the court to

issue a warning to Najib regarding his Facebook post on Dec 29 where he urged Zeti to respond to allegations that her family received more than RM100mil, said to be from 1MDB funds, from fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low.

The allegations had first surfaced on *Malaysia Today* blog, which is owned by fugitive blogger Raja Petra Kamaruddin.

Najib, 68, is facing four charges using his position to obtain bribes totalling RM2.28bil from 1MDB funds and 21 charges of money laundering involving the same amount.

The trial continues on Feb 8.