

NAJIB'S SPEECHWRITER PAID RM23 MILLION

Company roped in by ex-PM in 2011 and received the money over three years, court told

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DATUK Seri Najib Razak's former speechwriter said he received RM22.98 million over three years for his services to the former prime minister.

Semarak Konsortium Satu founder Mohd Omar Mustapha, 51, said he was paid for his international media consultancy services by Najib through 39 cheques from 2011 to 2014.

Omar said his work with Najib started after the government decided not to renew the contract with public relations

firm Apco Worldwide.

"This decision came following the revelation that the government had spent RM76.8 million a year on Apco from July 2009 to June 2010.

"In March 2011, I identified a business opportunity and approached Najib to offer him international media team services and English speechwriting.

"I presented these services on a cost up-front (reimbursable basis), where I would submit monthly expense claims and profit margins for reimbursement by him. Najib agreed to the arrangement.

"No contract was requested or signed for these services, and Najib did not request a contract either. This arrangement was based on a verbal agreement."

Omar was testifying as a witness in Najib's corruption trial, in which the latter was accused

of misappropriating RM2.3 billion belonging to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

The Oxford University graduate said Najib was Semarak Konsortium's sole client, and the company was tasked with:

DRAFTING and refining speeches in English for Najib, whether in or outside the country;

COORDINATING matters with international media based in Malaysia;

ORGANISING interviews for Najib during visits abroad; and,

PROVIDING drafts of interviews or articles by Najib to international magazines or newspapers.

Omar said he never billed Najib or issued a receipt for his payments.

Besides the four fund misappropriation charges, Najib, 69, is also facing 21 charges of money laundering involving the same amount.

The trial before judge Datuk Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues.



Mohd Omar Mustapha

