

Najib was not asked about funds transfer, says MACC witness

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KUALA LUMPUR: A Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) investigating officer in the 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB) probe did not ask Datuk Seri Najib Razak about a US\$700mil (RM3.3bil at current rates) transfer to a company linked to fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, the High Court has heard.

Senior officer Nur Aida Arifin said she had inquired about the matter with former 1MDB CEO

Datuk Shahrol Azral Ibrahim Halmi instead, and that the information was sufficient.

The 49th prosecution witness said this during a cross-examination by Najib's lawyer Wan Azwan Aiman yesterday.

Wan Azwan: Did you ask Najib if the instruction to transfer 70% of the sum came from him?

Nur Aida: I asked Shahrol.

Wan Azwan asked the witness if she had asked Najib about the transfer, to which Nur Aida answered in the negative.

Wan Azwan: Don't you think

you should have asked Najib as it is important?

Nur Aida: No.

The transfer is related to 1MDB's joint venture (JV) with Saudi Arabia-based PetroSaudi International Ltd (PSI).

It was previously heard in court that in the JV agreement, which was signed on Sept 28, 2009, 1MDB had injected US\$1bil funds in cash as starting capital for a 40% stake in the JV company while PetroSaudi Holdings Cayman (a company which was purportedly a subsidiary of PSI) injected its

assets worth US\$108mil for a 60% stake.

However, it was said that through Shahrol's instructions, US\$700mil from the US\$1bil was diverted into Good Star Ltd, a company linked to Low.

Najib's defence had argued that the top management of 1MDB, including Shahrol, had hoodwinked Najib and worked in cahoots with Low.

Wan Azwan: Shahrol was Low's alter ego.

Nur Aida: I disagree. He believed that every instruction from Low was from Najib.

Najib, 70, is on trial for 25 charges in total – four for abuse of power that allegedly brought him the financial benefit to the tune of RM2.28bil; and 21 for money laundering involving the same amount of money.

The hearing continues before Justice Collin Lawrence Sequerah today.

