

# NAJIB DENIES SEEKING BAILOUT FROM CHINA

Ex-PM insists aide's China trip focused on investment, not assistance

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**D**ATUK Seri Najib Razak and the prosecution clashed in the High Court yesterday over allegations of a "secret bailout mission" involving his former aide, Datuk Amhari Efendi Nazaruddin, to China.

Deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib argued that Amhari's trip to China, orchestrated by fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho, better known as Jho Low, was part of Najib's efforts to involve China in settling 1Malaysia Development Bhd's billions in debts.

In response, Najib vehemently

denied the allegations, saying that Amhari's trip was to meet Chinese state-owned enterprise businessmen interested in investing in Malaysian projects, not to seek bailout assistance.

Testifying in the same trial earlier, Amhari had said that Najib and Low planned to involve Chinese government-linked companies (GLCs) in taking on 1MDB and SRC International's debts.

He had said Low had attended his meeting with the Chinese GLC facilitator, the state-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission.

During cross-examination, Akram pressed Najib, pointing out that he failed to identify the specific Chinese businessmen Amhari was meant to meet.

The former Pekan member of parliament responded that Amhari was tasked with finding them.

**Akram:** I put it to you, Datuk Seri, that you wanted China to settle the debts (of 1MDB and SRC International).

**Najib:** No. It is impossible. There is no mechanism or instruction from me. Case closed-lah. There is no evidence. The case is closed.

Meanwhile, Najib admitted to sending Amhari to Abu Dhabi to resolve the dispute between 1MDB and International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC) after the China visit.

He said he preferred sending someone from his office, whom he trusted, rather than 1MDB's top management.

Najib said he wanted to resolve the dispute outside of the International Arbitration Court.

He said Mubadala Investment Co's chief executive officer, Khalid Khalifa Al Mubarak, had al-



Datuk Seri Najib Razak leaving the court after proceedings in Kuala Lumpur on Jan 19, last year. The ex-prime minister yesterday admitted to sending his then aide to Abu Dhabi to resolve the dispute between 1Malaysia Development Bhd and International Petroleum Investment Company. **REUTERS PIC**

so requested that the issue be settled at the prime ministerial level.

**Akram:** Did he (Amhari) meet Khalid in Abu Dhabi?

**Najib:** Yes. He met Khalid to settle the dispute between 1MDB and IPIC.

**Akram:** What is his (Amhari's) position in 1MDB?

**Najib:** He has no position. He represented me to resolve the issue between 1MDB and IPIC.

**Akram:** Why didn't you instruct the 1MDB board of directors to go there?

**Najib:** Because the crown prince (Khalid) wanted the negotiation at the prime ministerial level

to solve the issue.

**Akram:** The crown prince requested Amhari?

**Najib:** No. I wanted someone from my office whom I could trust. I trusted Amhari at that time.

The prosecution also suggested that Amhari's trip to Abu Dhabi was for Najib's personal interests, which Najib denied.

Najib faces four charges of using his position to obtain RM2.3 billion in bribes from 1MDB funds and 21 charges of money laundering involving the same amount.

The trial before presiding judge Datuk Collin Lawrence Sequerah continues.