

NAJIB BECAME SUSPECT IN 1MDB PROBE LATER, SAYS EX-COP

This was because of inflow of money into former PM's personal account, he tells court

PUTRAJAYA

FORMER 1Malaysia Development Bhd scandal investigating officer R. Rajagopal told the High Court here yesterday that Datuk Seri Najib Razak was identified as a suspect in Bukit Aman's money laundering investigations into the sovereign wealth fund.

Rajagopal, who is now retired and formerly attached to Bukit Aman's Commercial Crime Investigation Department (CCID), testified that this was because there was an inflow of money from 1MDB to Najib's personal bank account.

"Initially, the former prime minister was not a suspect at the start of the investigation in 2015.

"It was still too early then as we had yet to record statements from many witnesses, which included members of 1MDB's board of directors and management," he said.

The 11th defence witness said this

when questioned by deputy public prosecutor Ahmad Akram Gharib at Najib's trial for the alleged misappropriation of RM2.3 billion in 1MDB funds.



Rajagopal clarified that Najib had not been charged with criminal breach of trust involving 1MDB.

Akram: When you took statements from the witnesses in this case, did any of them mention Najib's name?

Rajagopal: Yes, several witnesses mentioned Najib's name repeatedly.

Rajagopal recalled that the ini-

tial police report, which led to the CBT investigation, was lodged by former Umno leader Datuk Seri Khairuddin Abu Hassan.

The report was based on media reports about governance issues at 1MDB, which had caused it to accrue billions of ringgit in debt.

On Oct 30 last year, trial judge Datuk Collin Lawrence Sequerah ordered Najib to enter his defence on money laundering and corruption charges relating to the case.

Najib, 71, faces 25 charges, including four counts of abusing his position to accept RM2.3 billion in bribes from 1MDB funds and 21 charges of money laundering involving the same amount. The hearing continues on April 7.