

Jho Low desperate to stop Najib's cheques from bouncing - Former banker

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 29 (Bernama) -- The High Court was told today that fugitive businessman Low Taek Jho or Jho Low seemed desperate to stop the cheques of former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak from his three AmBank accounts from bouncing.

Former AmBank relationship manager Joanna Yu Ging Ping, 48, said that based on several BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) chats between herself and Jho Low, the latter had told her to make sure that the cheques issued from Najib's three accounts would not bounce.

The accounts, each with a specific code name, namely Y1MY with account number ending 898, 1MY ending 808 and MY ending 906, were confirmed by the 54th prosecution witness during cross-examination by Najib's lawyer Harvinderjit Singh on the 44th day of the trial of Najib on seven counts of misappropriation of SRC International Sdn Bhd (SRC) funds totalling RM42 million.

Harvinderjit: On 21st January 2014, Jho Low messaged you "How should we flow money into Y1MY account" and you answered "Have asked branch not to reject cheque" to which the businessman replied "Yes, please, do not reject cheque".

Yu: Yes.

Harvinderjit: On 30th June 2014, a text from Jho Low "Make sure cheque doesn't get bounced" and you replied "Have asked branch, might have to wait until 11.30 am" and on another occasion he texted you "Please clear cheque, do not bounce it whatever you do" and to which you replied "Have asked branch to hold as long as possible".

Harvinderjit: Then on the same date, he messaged, "Aiyoh, cannot reject lah. Need to clear. Just hold on first". All of that happened (on the same day).

Yu: Yes.

Harvinderjit: There was some form of desperation in this message

Yu: I told him the cut-off time was 5.30 pm.

Harvinderjit: (Jho Low was) so desperate

Yu: I believe so.

At some point, based on the BBM chats read aloud in court by Harvinderjit, Jho Low also reminded Yu to let AmBank's former group managing director, Ashok Ramamurthy, know that "MNR cheque cannot bounce". MNR was used by Jho Low to refer to Mohd Najib Razak.

Earlier, the court had heard how Najib's accounts were constantly overdrawn, often forcing Yu to contact Jho Low or account mandate holder Nik Faisal Ariff Kamil to resolve the issue.

Yu said Jho Low also had instructed her to destroy the cheque books for Najib's 2013 account, which the witness said she did not comply with.

Harvinderjit: Jho Low asked you to destroy old cheque books but you did not do it

Yu: Usually, we will pass it back to the branch to check the stamp duty computed on the pages left.

Harvinderjit: Why didn't you destroy it

Yu: They are not my cheques.

Harvinderjit: Why don't you tell him "we cannot destroy"

Yu: After closing off any account, it is the normal practice that we pass the cheque books back to the branch.

The trial before Justice Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali continues Wednesday.

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