

Defendant alleges forgery in graft case

Former Deyaar CEO blames Ruler's Court official

- By Bassam Za'za', Senior Reporter
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Dubai: Deyaar's former CEO on Wednesday accused a Ruler's Court departmental director of forging a financial report submitted in the Deyaar graft case and asked prosecutors to question him.

Deyaar's 44-year-old American former CEO, Z.S., accused M.M., the director of the Financial Control Department of the Ruler's Court of forging the financial report submitted to the Dubai Misdemeanour Court.

The startling claim, to Presiding Judge Rifaat Mahmoud Tulba Othman, surprised all the attendees in courtroom 9.

"[Under] article 257 of the Federal Penal Code, I ask the court to refer M.M. to prosecutors to be questioned for the charge of forging the report," said Z.S., who has been in custody for two years.

He also requested Presiding Judge Othman to adjourn the case so he could submit evidence and new documents corroborating his claims.

The judge then replied: "We have to look into your claims and review the documents and evidence which you will submit. Then we will decide whether there is any forgery and see whether to refer him [M.M.] to the Public Prosecution for questioning."

Meanwhile Z.S.'s lawyer, Ali Abdullah Al Shamsi, asked the judge to allow him to present seven or eight defence witnesses in the next hearing. Al Shamsi also handed the court a financial consultation report which he said proved Z.S. did not embezzle money or cause any loss to Deyaar.

"Your honour, the defence also requests the court to appoint a neutral financial expert to look into all the lawsuit's papers and documents. The neutral financial expert should also submit a financial report clarifying whether there are any financial irregularities in the case," Al Shamsi added.

Z.S. had denied defrauding, swindling and embezzling nearly Dh240 million from Deyaar.

He also rejected charges of breach of trust, forgery and using fake documents, revealing Deyaar's secrets and aiding and abetting a crime.

Seven other suspects, who face various fraud and corruption charges, also pleaded not guilty.

Presiding Judge Othman adjourned the case until March 24.

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