

Razaleigh files libel suit over reports

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah today filed a libel suit against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad and Utusan Melayu (M) Berhad over reports of the Prime Minister's allegations that he said Semangat 46 would destroy Pas and DAP if it won the general election.

The suit by the former Member of Parliament for Gua Musang, Kelantan, was filed with the High Court registry at 11.15am by Messrs Yeoh Poh San and Co.

The Prime Minister is named as the first defendant while the NSTP and Utusan Melayu are named as the second and third defendant, respectively.

In his statement of claim, Tengku Razaleigh said the defendants had falsely and maliciously published or caused to publish the reports which appeared in *Utusan Malaysia* and *Utusan Melayu* on Sept 21 and Oct 2, and in *Berita Harian* and the *New Straits Times* on Sept 22 and Sept 24, respectively.

He said the reports meant and were understood to mean that he was a hypocrite, a liar and/or a dishonest person unfit for public office.

Tengku Razaleigh contended that he had not said that he would destroy Pas and DAP if the Barisan Alternatif, headed by him as an alternative to the Barisan Nasional, ruled the country.

The statements were lies cooked up by Dr Mahathir and aimed at dissolving the Barisan Alternatif, he said.

Tengku Razaleigh said his character and reputation had been "severely injured" and he had been brought into public scandal, odium and contempt and suffered damages because of the reports.

He is asking for special damages of \$12,000 for costs incurred to meet Pas and DAP supporters to refute the allegations, and costs and any further or other relief deemed fit by the court.