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Court-Anwar (Opening)

PROSECUTION WILL PROVE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ANWAR

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 3 (Bernama) -- The prosecution will prove that Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had used his position as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister to serve his personal interests.

Senior Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk Abdul Gani Patail disclosed this to the High Court at the outset of today's proceedings against Anwar before Justice Datuk S. Augustine Paul.

Abdul Gani said the prosecution had made four charges against Anwar under Section 2(1), Emergency (Essential Powers) Ordinance No 22 1970 which carries a maximum sentence of 14 years' jail and fine of up to RM20,000.

He said the prosecution would adduce evidence beyond reasonable doubt that Anwar had committed the offences when he was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

He said the events which led to the charges against Anwar originated from a letter dated August 5 1997 from Ummi Hafilda binti Ali to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad pertaining to Anwar's misconduct and the sworn statement by Azizan Azizan Abu Bakar, and a letter with the heading "Talqin Terbuka Untuk Anwar Ibrahim" or "An Open Talqin For Anwar Ibrahim". (The `Talqin' is a recitation of the creed to the dead on internment).

Abdul Gani said the prosecution would also prove that Anwar had taken various actions to deny the contents of the said letters and sworn statement by using the Special Branch of the Royal Malaysia Police.

He said Anwar had met the Director of Special Branch, Datuk Mohd Said Awang and the Special Branch Deputy Director II, Datuk Amir Junus at his official residence and directed them to obtain letters of denial from Ummi Hafilda and Azizan, on Aug 18, 1997 and Aug 29, 1997 respectively.

"These letters were purported to have denied the contents of the first letter from Ummi Hafilda dated Aug 5, 1997 as well as the sworn statement by Azizan," he added.

The prosecution will call 52 witnesses during the trial which started yesterday and expected to end on Nov 14.

At the outset of today's proceedings, the court rejected an application by Anwar's leading counsel, Raja Aziz Addruse to stay the proceeding pending the appeal against the court's dismissal of the defence's objection on the Emergency (Essential Powers) Ordinance No 22, 1970.

Justice Datuk S. Augustine Paul had made several decisions which were technical and procedural in nature, including rejecting the preliminary objection by the defence counsel over the validity of Emergency (Essential Powers) Ordinance No 22 1970 which was applied for the four charges on grounds that it had been repealed by the Dewan Rakyat on Oct 22.

Raja Aziz said the defence would file an appeal on the rejection and they have 14 days to do so.

At today's proceedings, Paul also clarified that the court order disallowing the Bar Council from acting as observer in the case still stands.

Anwar, who appeared less cheerful than yesterday, wore a blue-striped shirt and dark blue pants, and was brought into the court at 2.06pm. He immediately hugged his mother Datin Che Yan Hamid, wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and his friend from Indonesia, Dr Adnan Buyung Nasution from the International Commission of Jurists based in Geneva.

-- BERNAMA

SBB AO