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Court-Anwar (Daim)

ALLEGATIONS OF DAIM'S SEXUAL MISCONDUCT NOT RELEVANT, SAYS JUDGE

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 25 (Bernama) -- Justice Datuk Arifin Jaka today rapped Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for bringing up allegations of sexual misconduct of First Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin in his sodomy trial in the High Court here.

Justice Arifin said that the sexual misconduct allegations against Daim were not relevant to the charge faced by him and his adopted brother, Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja.

Anwar, testifying on the second day of his defence, alleged that Daim had used his private jet to bring in foreign women through the VIP channel, without going through customs and immigration checks.

He said at that time, he was puzzled as to why Daim had insisted that he tender his resignation and also framing the charge against him with Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah.

"I told him you mean you have the audacity to fabricate such malicious lies about my alleged corruption and sexual misconduct when it is public knowledge that you have squandered billions from the country and you have been using your private jet to bring in foreign women using the VIP channel without going through the customs and immigration," he said.

Anwar, 52, and Sukma, 38, are jointly tried on separate charges of sodomising Azizan Abu Bakar, 39, at Sukma's apartment in Tivoli Villa, Bangsar, here, one night at 7.45, between January and March, 1993.

Sukma, a businessman, faces another charge of abetting the former deputy prime minister and finance minister in sodomising Azizan, the former driver of Anwar's wife, Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, at the same time and place.

Anwar, who was sacked on Sept 2, last year, for alleged sexual misconduct, told the court on the 64th day of the trial today, that Daim had also abused his power to acquire shares valued at RM400 million without purchasing them, to which he had raised objections and reported the matter to the prime minister.

However, he said, no action was taken against Daim.

"No action was taken against him, only money was taken from him," he said which drew laughter from the public gallery.

Anwar also told the court of a dispute between he and Daim over his (Anwar's) stand during his tenure as finance minister in making decisions involving Daim's interest.

However, he said, the final decision would always be in Daim's favour due to the intervention of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

At this juncture, Senior Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk Abdul Gani Patail objected on the grounds that it was not relevant but was overruled by the court when Anwar's defence counsel, Christopher Fernando, said that it was linked to the defence of conspiracy, leading to his prosecution for allegedly sodomising Azizan.

Anwar said that he helped Daim to procure Hock Hua Bank even though he disagreed as it was against the procedures of the central bank which had expressed reservation over the matter.

When Fernando asked Anwar to relate other instances, Justice Arifin said it was not necessary as there was already sufficient evidence to show that Anwar and Daim were in conflict.

Anwar said that when Daim advised him to resign, he had confronted him (Daim) and told him not to threaten or fabricate charges against him.

He said he had told Daim that his actions and malpractices would be exposed even though he claimed Daim was protected by the attorney-general and the prime minister.

Later, Anwar said, they had an argument in which Daim told him that he was only trying to him, saying, "If you resign, the matter will be closed".

When Fernando asked whether Daim, in pursuance to the conspiracy, met with Ummi Hafilda Ali, Anwar said Daim had confirmed in writing that he had met her.

Ummi Hafilda is the writer of the letter on "Perihal Salahlaku Timbalan Perdana Menteri" (The Matter on the Misconduct of the Deputy Prime Minister) containing allegations of Anwar's sexual misconduct, sent to the prime minister together with a sworn statement by Azizan that he was sodomised by Anwar.

Anwar said he knew that Ummi Hafilda, Azizan and Ziela Jalil, the wife of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob, had met former Melaka Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik, whom he alleged was involved in the conspiracy to topple him.

He also knew that the book "50 Dalil Mengapa Anwar Tidak Boleh Jadi PM" (50 Reasons Why Anwar Cannot Become PM) had been printed and distributed from a premises previously owned by Abdul Rahim at Taman Kosas in Ampang, here.

Anwar said that the book portrayed him as "a most despicable person" and the book had been distributed to some delegates a few days before the Umno general assembly last year by including it in the bags supplied to delegates.

He said that his (Anwar's) staff also informed him that the book had been distributed outside the conference hall at the Putra World Trade Centre where the assembly was held.

However, he said, several delegates denounced the defamation and the attempt to topple him as contained in the book.

Anwar said it was not the first time that an attempt had been made to cause his downfall because the first attempt was made the previous year (1997) when Ummi Hafilda's letter was distributed for the same purpose and he had lodged a police report on the matter.

He said that the prime minister, in handing over the letter to him, asked him to "read and destroy" it.

The hearing was adjourned when Anwar complained of headaches.

-- BERNAMA

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