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Court-Anwar (Fight)

ANWAR CLAIMS HE HAS NO OPTION BUT TO FIGHT

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 11 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim told the High Court here today that he had no option but to fight after he was given an ultimatum by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to either resign or be sacked and face criminal charges ranging from sexual misconduct to treason.

"I said I have been very loyal to him. I have worked diligently and faithfully for the party and the government. To continue with these threats and fabrications, I have no option but to fight because he gave me the ultimatum just as I reiterated yesterday," Anwar said when testifying in his defence on four charges of corrupt practice.

Anwar, 51, said so when he related his parting remarks to Dr Mahathir during further examination-in-chief by counsel Raja Aziz Addruse on the fourth day of his defence.

Yesterday, Raja Aziz informed the court that the defence had finished with its questioning of Anwar and his client was ready to be questioned by the prosecution, led by Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah.

However, at the outset of today's session, Raja Aziz informed the court that after the court was adjourned yesterday, he realised there were three other points which he would like to ask Anwar, based on his client's appeal letters to Dr Mahathir.

Raja Aziz then asked Anwar to read certain parts in the two letters marked D76 and D77 which the defence team considered relevant to establish his innocence.

Anwar said he brought up the issue of police conspiracy in the letter to impress upon the prime minister that the conduct of the police in their investigation into allegations of his sexual misconduct was suspect and showed malice towards him.

In the letter, he also referred to the apparent contradiction between what was said by former Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Noor to him and the subsequent conduct of the police investigation.

"I had to ask the prime minister whether he give specific instructions to the police to frame and fabricate charges against me because throughout the one year of investigation by the Special Branch and the CID, they did not find anything incriminating," he said.

But, Anwar said, at that point, he still assured the prime minister that he would give all the necessary co-operation and he would not, at that time, question the integrity of the IGP and the sttorney-general.

At this juncture, Justice Datuk S. Augustine Paul asked Anwar whether it was written in the letter, and he replied that not all the facts were there and he had to explain to the court what actually transpired.

"For example, in page three on the last paragraph in D76, it referred to the police investigation after one week. It was not confined to the issue of defamation but was an attempt to smear my character. I then became a suspect of the police, IGP and the AG," he said.

Anwar said he also made reference to the original allegations in the letter "Perihal Salah Laku Timbalan Perdana Menteri" (The Matter Of The Misconduct Of The Deputy Prime Minister) by Umami Hafilda Ali and the sworn statement by Azizan and the anonymous letter "Talqin Terbuka Untuk Anwar Ibrahim" (Last Rites For Anwar Ibrahim) with the book "50 Dalil Mengapa Anwar Tidak Boleh Jadi PM" (50 Reasons Why Anwar Cannot Become PM).

He said the allegations made against him in those documents were no

longer significant to the police, IGP, attorney-general and the prime minister but all of them had extended the web of deceit by the investigation into new and unchartered area or territory.

In his letter, Anwar also touched on his claim that the police had attempted to force his former tennis partner, Datuk S.Nallakaruppan, to work with the police against him.

"My lord, the issue is not confined here. It was extended from sexual misconduct to accepting RM60 million to treason, working as a foreign agent as we could later see in SAC I Musa Hassan and the AG affidavits," he said.

Anwar said it was an attempt at vilification. It was not done professionally, was unethical and totally corrupt, he said.

As the prosecution objected to this statement, Raja Aziz maintained that these were the feelings expressed by Anwar in his letter to the prime minister and the judge advised the defence not to go too deeply into it.

When Anwar tried several times to relate to the court about his "differences" with the prime minister which he claimed made Dr Mahathir "very angry with him", the judge ruled it as irrelevant.

Raja Aziz protested that the prime minister's attitude could be the basis of the conspiracy theory which they had adopted as its defence and trying to show it in circumstantial evidence.

Justice Paul said if the defence felt that that was the situation, then they should file a notice of motion to have the charges against Anwar struck off on the ground that there had been abuse of process.

When Raja Aziz pointed out that conspiracy relates to credibility and the prosecution witnesses could have come to court and lie, Justice Paul rejected the idea.

At one point, Senior Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk Abdul Gani Patail complained that Anwar's testimony "looks like he is giving a speech" and his counsel should ask the questions instead of letting Anwar, "the poor accused" went on his own in all directions.

Anwar drew laughter from the packed court room when he replied that he agreed with Abdul Gani's statement that he was indeed "quite poor".

-- BERNAMA
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