

18 JUN 1999

Court-Anwar (Haniff)

ANWAR HAD INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH TWO INDIVIDUALS, COURT TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, June 18 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had intimate relationships with two individuals including a Pakistani-born permanent resident of the United States in 1993, former Inspector-General of Police Tun Haniff Omar told the High Court here today.

Haniff, who held the post from 1974 to 1993, said that he knew of the matter from the Special Branch.

He later reported the matter to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as he was afraid that Anwar, then deputy prime minister and finance minister, could be exposed to blackmail.

The prime minister did not show any reaction even though he was told that the Special Branch had strong proof, said Haniff, the third prosecution witness at the sodomy trial of Anwar and his adopted brother, Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja.

"I emphasised that the proof by the Special Branch was strong but he still did not show any reaction.

"Therefore, as far as I was concerned, that was sufficient and if he could take action to prevent the possibility of blackmail, I was satisfied," he said.

Questioned by Senior Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk Abdul Gani Patail, Haniff said that he was accompanied by then Special Branch Director Datuk Zulkifli Abdul Rahman at the meeting with Dr Mahathir at the Prime Minister's Department on Oct 9, 1993.

Anwar, 51, is charged with voluntarily committing carnal intercourse against the order of nature on Azizan Abu Bakar, his wife's former driver, at unit no 10-7-2, Tivoli Villa in Jalan Medang Tanduk, Bangsar, here, at 7.45pm between January and March, 1993.

Sukma, 38, faces a similar charge and another charge with abetting Anwar in the commission of the offence, at the same time and place.

When asked to explain what he meant by the intimate relationship that Anwar had with the two men, he said that it was not a common relationship between two friends but one which involved elements of sex.

Haniff, now a director of six companies, said that their meeting lasted between five and 10 minutes.

He said that several days after the meeting, a fellow member of his badminton club, Datuk Andrew Leong, had contacted him.

"Leong conveyed Anwar's request to meet me at his official residence in Bukit Damansara the following day, after dawn prayers.

"I said that I certainly could but what could the reason be. If I am not mistaken, Leong mentioned it was a matter relating to what I had informed the PM," he said.

He said that at the meeting, also attended by Leong, Anwar asked him whether many police officers knew of "the matter".

Asked what he meant by "the matter", Haniff said that even though Anwar did not state it clearly, he came to the conclusion that it meant the matter he had informed the prime minister.

He said that Anwar was told that not many police officers knew about it as the investigation by the Special Branch on the matter was based on a "need to know" principle.

Anwar, he said, also asked regarding the possibility of police officers blackmailing him but he had stated "Eh! what about black mail. We are not in the black-mailing business. But what business have you to carry on like

this. You ought to stop it".

He said that the matter ended just like that as Anwar did not show any reaction to his reply.

Asked whether Anwar had made any denial to him over the matter, Haniff said that Anwar did not.

Cross-examined by Christopher Fernando, who heads Anwar's defence team, he denied that he had an axe to grind with Anwar for trying to prevent him from becoming a board member of Genting Highland Group as Anwar was at that time making efforts to stop gambling activities in the country.

To a suggestion by Fernando that Anwar had stated to him that he (Haniff) should not sit on the board of directors as he was a Muslim and a former IGP, Haniff said that it was a lie, it never happened and it was merely a fabrication by Anwar.

"My Lord, this may be the view of some parties, not mine, as in the Quran, I understand there are three verses on gambling," he said.

He also denied having told Anwar that he could not reject the offer by the group of companies as the offer was lucrative.

Haniff said that Anwar never called him to offer advice when he was offered the directorship of any of the companies.

"At the time I was invited to sit on the Genting board of directors, my salary was not mentioned but I had written a letter to state that I did not want any extra payments that may cause jealousy among those working with Genting," he said.

At this juncture, Justice Datuk Arifin Jaka asked Fernando the purpose of his questioning and Fernando said it was to show Haniff's motive as he had a grudge against Anwar.

Justice Arifin allowed Fernando to proceed with his questioning.

To Fernando's suggestion that Anwar had strongly advised him that as a Muslim, he should not set aside his religious beliefs on account of money however much, Haniff said: "My Lord, I wish he had said all those things to me. He had never given me any advice."

Fernando: "But this occurred sometime after your retirement...."

Haniff: "I remember that when I was still IGP, before I took leave prior to retirement, nobody knew I was joining Genting. I became a director of Genting after my retirement."

Fernando: "Tun, before you retired, several people knew that you will be appointed a director of Genting."

Haniff: "There was a possibility."

He however agreed that Anwar could have known of the proposal to appoint him as a director of Genting as he was finance minister.

When Fernando suggested that he had met Anwar over the appointment and the meeting took place at Anwar's office in the Finance Ministry, Haniff said: "More likely it happened in his mind."

He also denied that Anwar had told him that if he were to proceed with his intention to become a director of Genting, he (Anwar) would ask the prime minister to dissuade him from doing so.

To a suggestion that he was annoyed over what was stated by Anwar, Haniff said: "How can I be annoyed with a non-issue."

Asked why he, as IGP then, did not take action after being aware of Anwar's "misconduct", he said that his duties were multi-faceted and did not cover crime alone.

He said that he had the discretion to take action or otherwise but in this matter, his priority was the nation's security.

For this reason, he said, he did not inform the matter to then Attorney-General Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman and because of this in a press statement after Anwar's dismissal, Abu Talib stated that he did not know of the matter.

Asked what prompted him to make a statement on Anwar's "misconduct" after the prime minister had exposed Anwar's "misconduct" in September last year, he said that it was to affirm the prime minister's statement.

"The press statement was to affirm the Prime Minister's statement made a day before that I had informed him about Datuk Seri Anwar's intimate relationships with certain identified persons," he said.

When Fernando stated that as a police officer with a law degree, he should know that his press statement was highly defamatory, Haniff said that at that time Anwar had not been charged.

"I don't think I have breached the rule of sub-judice or I have breached the rule of defamation. It's the truth," he said.

Asked what position he holds in the Genting Group, Haniff said he is its deputy chairman.

Hearing continues tomorrow.

-- BERNAMA

SBB RA RM