

26 JAN 1999
Court-Libel
ANWAR SUES SUN MEDIA FOR LIBEL

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 26 (Bernama) -- Former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim today filed a suit against the Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd, seeking RM100 million in damages for libel allegedly published in an article in its newspaper.

The writ of summons was filed by Messrs Karpal Singh & Co at the registry of the High Court in Wisma Denmark.

Anwar contended that the company had published an article containing libel in its Sept 23, 1998 issue of The Sun newspaper.

Anwar is also seeking an injunction order to restrain The Sun Media Corporation, formerly known as Sun Media Group Sdn Bhd, by its directors, servants and/or agents from further publishing the said or any similar libel upon him.

He is also seeking interest to the adjudged sum, costs and any further or other relief deemed fit and proper by the court.

Anwar, 51, who was sacked from his post as deputy prime minister and finance minister on Sept 2, last year is facing five charges of sodomy and five counts of corruption.

The trial of four of his corruption charges continues today after the High Court postponed the trial on Jan 15 on his lawyers request and also in conjunction with the Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration.

Present at the registry were lawyers Karpal Singh, Gobind Singh Deo and K. Manoharan.

Speaking to reporters outside the registry today, Karpal Singh said the filing of today's writ of summons was a follow-up of his (Anwar) defamation suit against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Anwar filed the suit yesterday, also seeking RM100 million in damages for slander allegedly uttered by him at a news conference on Sept 22, last year which resulted in the said words to be subsequently republished in the international news magazine Newsweek, on Oct 5, last year.

Karpal Singh also told reporters that the media should be careful in reporting, adding that it should verify its reports.

"The media cannot say "We're just reporting".... The media takes upon itself the responsibility for reporting something that may not be sustained later on," he said.

Meanwhile, Karpal Singh, in a press statement released to the press today, called on the Federal Court to deliver its judgment as soon as possible in the case of journalist M.G.G Pillai and six others who were appealing to set aside the Court of Appeal's decision, which had ordered them to pay RM10 million in damages to Tan Sri Vincent Tan for libel.

He said the Federal Court had reserved its judgment on the said case prior to hearing its appeal on Jan 12 last year.

"To ensure certainty in the law relating to quantum in defamation cases, I call upon the Federal Court to deliver its judgment as soon as possible so that there could be authoritative guidelines on the subject by the highest court in the land," he added.

-- BERNAMA
JA RM