

10 JUN 1999

Court-Anwar (Mahathir)

DR M'S APPLICATION TO BE HEARD ON JULY 2

KUALA LUMPUR, 10 Jun (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's application to strike out the RM100 million defamation suit brought against him by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim will be heard on July 2.

High Court judge Datuk Dr R.K.Nathan, who announced this today, said senior assistant registrar Norliza Othman would hear the application.

Anwar filed his suit on Jan 25, claiming that the prime minister had falsely and maliciously spoken to local and foreign reporters accusing him of committing immoral acts.

The former deputy prime minister claimed that Dr Mahathir uttered the words knowing that they would be published locally and internationally.

In his statement of defence filed on March 22, Dr Mahathir contended that he spoke the words as prime minister on an occasion of qualified privilege.

Anwar, in his reply, says the defence of qualified privilege is not open to Dr Mahathir because he has acted maliciously and in bad faith by uttering and causing the offending words to be published and republished.

Besides damages, interest and costs, Anwar is seeking an injunction restraining Dr Mahathir from furthering uttering such words against him.

Anwar, who was sacked by Dr Mahathir on Sept 2 last year, is currently serving a six-year jail after being found guilty of abusing his power.

-- BERNAMA

ja/sbb sk