

01 NOV 1999

Court-Anwar (Mahathir)

DR MAHATHIR WILL BE CALLED AFTER ANWAR, SUKMA COMPLETE THEIR TESTIMONY

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 1 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was not required to attend the sodomy trial of his former deputy, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, in the High Court here today because Anwar had not completed his testimony.

High Court deputy registrar Rozilah Salleh said both the defence and the prosecution had agreed that Dr Mahathir be called to testify after Anwar and his adopted brother, Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja, had completed their evidence.

The court had issued a fresh subpoena last Wednesday requiring the prime minister to attend court today after an earlier one did not state when the prime minister's presence was required. The subpoena was issued at Sukma's request.

Rozilah told reporters that the subpoena requiring Dr Mahathir to testify as a defence witness was served on him last Saturday.

Sukma's counsel, Gobind Singh Deo, confirmed that Dr Mahathir's presence in court was not required yet.

"He is not present today because Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is still giving evidence. We will inform the prime minister when we will require his attendance. We are confident that he will attend," he told reporters.

He said Dr Mahathir was expected to be called "somewhere towards the end of this week or early next week."

Asked whether Dr Mahathir would be interviewed before testifying, he said: "Definitely we will speak to him first before putting him on the stand."

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

Sukma, a businessman, is also charged with abetting Anwar to sodomise Azizan at the same place and time.

-- BERNAMA

SBB JK