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Court-Anwar

MEDIA BARRED FROM PUBLISHING ANWAR'S TESTIMONY ON CONVERSATIONS

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 10 (Bernama) -- The High Court here today directed the media not to publish the court testimony of former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim about his conversation with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Justice Datuk S. Augustine Paul also barred the media from publishing Anwar's evidence relating to his conversation with the former Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Noor.

"I'm going to direct the press not to publish it until the court makes a final ruling on it pending proof of the statements allegedly made by the two persons to the accused in so far as to what they said were concerned," said Paul.

He made the ruling after Anwar's counsel, Raja Aziz Addruse informed the court that the defence was unsure whether they wanted to call Dr Mahathir and Abdul Rahim as their witnesses.

Paul said the same ruling would apply to Anwar's testimony regarding a cabinet minister.

Earlier in the morning session, Anwar testified that he had "a few conversations" with Dr Mahathir and Abdul Rahim regarding the investigation into the allegations of his sexual misconduct.

Anwar mentioned the contents of the conversations which prompted the prosecution, led by Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah, to issue a series of objections.

At the outset of the trial which resumed after lunch-break, Paul asked Raja Aziz the purpose of the defence in bringing up the conversations.

Raja Aziz replied that as far as the IGP was concerned, it was to show the attitude of the police at that particular time.

"And so far as the PM is concerned, that was a follow-up to the meeting with the IGP where he advised the accused that the problem arising from the investigation should be settled by Anwar directly with the PM," Raja Aziz said.

The judge then told the defence that his purpose of asking the question was to know whether they (the defence) were going to call Dr Mahathir and Abdul Rahim as witnesses as the statements were made by them.

Paul said unless they were called as witnesses, Anwar's evidence on the conversations would remain a "hearsay".

"If it is to show the state of mind of the PM and the IGP, then it is admissible in court, if not, it's inadmissible," he said.

Raja Aziz then told the court that the defence might call Dr Mahathir and Abdul Rahim as witnesses.

Anwar then resumed his testimony on the third day of his defence on four charges of corrupt practice in the trial which entered its 53rd day.

In his evidence, Anwar denied he had used his office and his positions as the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to obtain the "kenyataan umum" (general statements) from Ummi Hafilda Ali and Azizan Abu Bakar regarding the allegations.

Ummi wrote the letter "Perihal Salah Laku Timbalan Perdana Menteri" (the misconduct of the deputy prime minister) which was sent to the PM together with Azizan's sworn statement alleging that he was sodomised by Anwar.

After Raja Aziz informed the court that he had finished his examination-in-chief with Anwar, Senior Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk

Abdul Gani Patail applied to the court to start the cross-examining tomorrow at 9am.

Paul allowed Abdul Gani's application and court was adjourned at 3.30pm.

--BERNAMA
SBB THG