

22 MAR 2000

ANWAR IBRAHIM SODOMY TRIAL RESTARTS TOMORROW

KUALA LUMPUR, March 22 (Bernama) -- The re-start of the sodomy trial of former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his adopted brother Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja scheduled for today, has been postponed to tomorrow.

High Court Deputy Registrar Rozilah Salleh announced the postponement in court at 10 am today.

The case was adjourned since Feb 21.

Anwar's leading counsel Christopher Fernando told reporters later that the postponement was because some of the lawyers in Anwar's case were involved in fellow counsel Zainur Zakaria's appeal before the Court of Appeal.

Zainur is appealing against his conviction and three month's jail sentence passed by the High Court for contempt on Nov 30 1998.

Fernando said Anwar's defence team was supposed to submit the issue of the relevancy of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's evidence to the sodomy hearing.

Anwar, 52, is being jointly tried with businessman Sukma Darmawan, 39, on a charge of sodomising Azizan Abu Bakar, 39, a former driver of Anwar's family.

Sukma is also facing another charge of abetting Anwar to sodomise Azizan.

-- BERNAMA

NHD RYN