

08/06/2000

Anwar's trial put off to tomorrow

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's sodomy trial will resume on Friday.

He failed today to delay his trial until the outcome of his appeal to the Federal Court against a ruling by the High Court that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad need not testify for the defence.

On Monday the Court of Appeal struck out Anwar's appeal against this ruling and ordered the sodomy trial to proceed.

It threw out the appeal without going into its merits after submissions by counsel from both sides following a preliminary objection from the prosecution.

Today Court of Appeal president Tan Sri Lamin Yunus in his chambers rejected an application by Anwar for a stay of proceedings until the final disposal of the appeal.

The stay was sought by Anwar's lawyers Karpal Singh and S.N. Nair. Senior Deputy Public Prosecutors Datuk Abdul Gani Patail and Datuk Azahar Mohamed appeared for the prosecution.

Following Monday's decision, the defence filed a notice of appeal. Subsequently parties were informed by the High Court that the trial would resume today.

In the High Court today all parties were present for the trial which normally begins about 9am. About 11.30am the parties were seen going into the chambers of the High Court Judge Datuk Arifin Jaka.

After about 15 minutes, Deputy Registrar Rozilah Salleh announced over the microphone that the trial had been postponed to Friday.

She said witnesses could not be informed in time for the trial today and also stated that the defence lawyers had wanted to meet Lamin to seek a stay of the trial.

Anwar and his adopted brother Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja, a businessman, are charged with sodomising Azizan Abu Bakar - Anwar's wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail's ex-driver - at 10-7-2, Tivoli Villa, Jalan Medan Tanduk, Bangsar, about 7.45pm between January and March 1993.

(END)