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Defamation suit: Saturday decision on Anwar's appeal

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The Court of Appeal has fixed Saturday to deliver its decision on an appeal by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim over his RM100 million defamation suit against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Anwar had appealed against the High Court's decision to strike out his defamation suit on a preliminary issue without going to full trial.

The Court of Appeal, which reserved decision on Aug 15 after hearing submissions by counsel from both sides, is expected to give its written grounds on Saturday.

Anwar's suit was struck out by High Court judge Datuk R.K. Nathan, on Aug 30, last year, for being "obviously unsustainable". Nathan had also awarded costs to Dr Mahathir.

Anwar filed his suit on Jan 25, last year claiming, among other things, that Dr Mahathir had, on Sept 22, 1998 "falsely and maliciously" spoken to local and foreign reporters accusing him of committing immoral acts.

He said the words were defamatory in their ordinary meaning and in the context they were spoken.

In his statement of defence, the Prime Minister had claimed justification.

Anwar was represented by Karpal Singh while Datuk Mohamed Adnan Shuaib appeared for Dr Mahathir before a panel of three judges.

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