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Mohd Azmin: Police tried to break my will

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's former private secretary told the High Court today the police had threatened him with 20 years under the Internal Security Act if he refused to admit being sodomised by Anwar.

Mohd Azmin Ali, the State Assemblyman for Hulu Kelang, said the police told him his wife and children had come to the lock-up to see him, but were denied access.

"However, I did not believe them since I had told my wife earlier not to take my children to the lock-up because it might put them in fear. I believe that it was an attempt by the police to break my will," he said.

Asked by judge Datuk Arifin Jaka about the relevance of the evidence, leading counsel Christopher Fernando who was conducting the examination-in-chief of Mohd Azmin said it was to show that the conspirators had used the police to fabricate evidence against Anwar.

At this juncture, Arifin told reporters in the public gallery not to report "out of context" and remarked that some reports on the case were out of place since the questions asked by counsel were not reported.

"Put the questions and the answers in your reports," he said.

Anwar and his adopted brother businessman Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja are charged with sodomising former driver Azizan Abu Bakar at Tivoli Villas apartment in Bangsar between January and March 1993.

Sukma is also facing a second charge of abetting Anwar in sodomising Azizan at the same time and place.

Azizan is the former driver of Anwar's wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

Questioned by Fernando, Mohd Azmin said he vehemently refused to admit that Anwar had sodomised him in spite of police insistence.

"I told them (the police) that as Muslims they should not slander without any proof and I asked them to put a Quran (in front of us) during the discussion.

"But they refused saying it was unnecessary since Quran tak main dalam perbincangan ini (don't bring in the Quran in the discussion)," Mohd Azmin said.

Mohd Azmin said when he stood his ground in not acceding to the demands by the police, they showed him a newspaper report on Sukma.

"They showed me a newspaper cutting and said that Sukma had admitted and asked me when I was going to admit," Mohd Azmin said.

To another question, Mohd Azmin said his interrogators also asked about his assets and that of his wife.

They told him to produce relevant documents, but he could not do so immediately.

However, later he wrote to the director of the Criminal Investigation Division undertaking to produce the documents.

Mohd Azmin said he recognised the six interrogators, but he did not know their names since they had refused to reveal their identities.

To another question, Mohd Azmin said he had met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in August 1997 who asked him about his sister Ummi Hafilda Ali and her reasons for writing a letter to him (the Prime Minister).

"I told him I did not know the actual reason. I said that she could be angry with me for not getting her any business opportunities," Mohd Azmin

said, adding he also told the Prime Minister that Ummi had used his name to meet some corporate figures.

Mohd Azmin said when he found out about it, he told the businessmen that he was not involved in any of Ummi's dealings.

He said he also told the Prime Minister that former Domestic Trade and Consumers Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob had told him that he had given a "large" Pemadam contract to Ummi.

Mohd Azmin said he also informed the Prime Minister about the roles played by Megat Junid and the PM's then political secretary Datuk Aziz Shamsuddin in the conspiracy as related by Ummi.

Arifin interjected, saying that what Mohd Azmin just said was hearsay.

However, the judge allowed the witness to continue after submission by Fernando who completed his examination-in-chief after Mohd Azmin said the Prime Minister told him that he would advise Megat Junid and Aziz.

Cross-examined by Senior Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk Abdul Gani Patail, Mohd Azmin said Anwar had given his "opinion" on the rationality of him (Mohd Azmin) lodging a police report against the book 50 Dalil Mengapa Anwar Ibrahim Tidak Boleh Jadi PM since his (Mohd Azmin's) family was implicated.

Questioned by Abdul Gani, Mohd Azmin said he did not tell Anwar that he had lodged a police report during the UMNO general assembly in June 1998.

Mohd Azmin said he did not read the whole book and was not sure if Ummi's letter containing sex allegations against Anwar and Azizan's statutory declaration that Anwar had sodomised him were in the book.

To another question, Mohd Azmin said he received the book from someone named Bakar several days before the general assembly.

Mohd Azmin said he only read about the part involving his family.

Hearing continues.

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