

14 JUNE 2000

Court-Sukma

SUKMA FILES NOTICE OF APPEAL ON PM'S TESTIMONY

KUALA LUMPUR, June 14 (Bernama) -- Businessman Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja is appealing against the Court of Appeal's decision to uphold a High Court ruling not to call Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as a witness in his sodomy trial.

Sukma, who is currently on trial together with his adopted brother, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, had his notice of appeal filed today at the Court of Appeal registry by his counsel, Gobind Singh Deo.

Anwar, the former deputy prime minister, also filed a similar notice on June 6 through one of his counsel, Sankaran Nair.

Both Sukma and Anwar had applied to the High Court to have Dr Mahathir as a defence witness in his personal capacity but was dismissed by trial judge Datuk Arifin Jaka.

On June 5, the Court of Appeal rejected their appeals after allowing preliminary objections raised by Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah who led the prosecution team, on the grounds that as the ruling was a final decision, it was not appealable.

Its president, Tan Sri Lamin Yunus, who sat with Court of Appeal judges Datuk Ahmad Fairuz Sheikh Abdul Halim and Datuk Denis Ong, also ordered the sodomy trial to proceed without further delay.

Anwar, 52, and Sukma, 39, are charged separately with sodomising Anwar's former family driver, Azizan Abu Bakar, at Sukma's apartment in Tivoli Villa, Bangsar, here, one night at 7.45 between January and March 1993.

Sukma also faces another charge of abetting Anwar, who is also former finance minister, to sodomise Azizan, 39, at the same time and place.

-- BERNAMA

SBB ES RM