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'Examination of Sukma showed no signs of anal penetration by blunt object'

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Forensic specialist Dr Zahari Noor told the High Court today that his medical examination of businessman Sukma Darmawan Sasmitaat Madja showed no signs of anal penetration by a blunt object.

Dr Zahari, from Hospital Kuala Lumpur, said this was his conclusion but added "whether he (Sukma) has been sodomised or not, I am not able to say".

He said this when cross-examined by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's leading counsel Christopher Fernando.

Anwar and his adopted brother Sukma are on trial for sodomising Azizan Abu Bakar at No 10-7-2, Tivoli Villa, Jalan Medang Tanduk, Bangsar, about 7.45pm, between January and March 1993.

Sukma is also facing a second charge of abetting Anwar in sodomising Azizan, who was the driver of Anwar's wife Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail at the same place, time and date.

Dr Zahari, who was called as a defence witness by Sukma, agreed that if a person had anal sex regularly, he would have a "wide anal canal" but said that this was only one of the signs. He also mentioned the other signs.

He said these signs would appear in habitual cases but he never found any of the signs on Sukma when he conducted the examination on Sept 9, 1998, at Bukit Aman.

Dr Zahari also said that he was not asked to examine Azizan.

Cross-examined by Senior Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk Azahar Mohamed, he agreed that the results of his examination did not rule out the possibility that Sukma had been sodomised.

He also agreed that the chances of any physical sign around or on the anus would be less likely to be found among consenting partners in homosexual activities.

"If there is any superficial injury or even any sign, that would have healed unless the activities are carried out habitually or it is very fresh," he said.

Earlier, in examination-in-chief by Sukma's counsel Gobind Singh Deo, Dr Zahari said he was asked to carry out a forensic examination on Sukma for any physical sign of being sodomised.

He said based on his examination, there were no signs to show that Sukma's anus had been penetrated by a blunt object, whether "recent or old".

To another question, he said Sukma had informed him that he had undergone an operation to remove haemorrhoids and that he (Dr Zahari) had seen signs of this treatment.

Before Dr Zahari was called, Sukma, who completed his defence today, disagreed that his evidence on moving into his apartment at Tivoli Villa in April 1993 was not true.

Cross-examined by Senior Deputy Public Prosecutor Datuk Abdul Gani Patail, Sukma also disagreed that he received the keys on Nov 18, 1992.

Sukma said he got them only on Dec 15, 1992.

To another question, he said he could not recall if he had received the keys to the main door of the apartment for the purpose of renovations on Nov 19, 1992.

He said the renovations of his apartment involved the living room, master bedroom, kitchen and the dining room.

To another question, he agreed that the air-conditioners and carpet would be fixed after other renovations had been completed.

Hearing continues.

This evening Gobind, when contacted at his office, said the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was expected to testify next week. He added that a subpoena was served on Dr Mahathir last year.