

Woman senator files RM50mil libel suit

Claims Usahanita ex-president defamed her in letter to govt leaders

SUN 4 APR 2001

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri: A senator has filed a RM50 million defamation suit against the former president of the Bumiputra Women Entrepreneurs Association (Usahanita) for allegedly distributing a defamatory letter involving her.

Datuk Nor Azah Awin, 48, who is also secretary-general of the Malaysian Senators Club named businesswoman Nor Azizah Borhan as defendant.

In her statement of claim

dated April 2, Nor Azah said the defendant had on Dec 14, 1999, wrote a defamatory letter about her to the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, which was also forwarded to other government figures such as Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Among other things, the letter alleges Nor Azah had unlawfully transferred ownership of one of the defendant's property to herself by forging her signature.

She said the defendant also maliciously stated in the letter that she had business ties with the siblings of for-

mer deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, therefore, insinuating she was not a supporter of the government.

She said a copy of the letter was handed to her on Aug 14 last year by International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz who informed her there was a possibility the letter would be circulated to the public.

The senator claimed the words in the letter meant and were understood to mean she is a person of no integrity, is unfit to be a leader and an example to the people and is an irresponsible businesswoman and corporate figure.

She claims her character, credibility and reputation have been injured and she has been brought into public scandal, odium and contempt.

She claims Nor Azizah's motive in writing the letter was "to give vent to her spite and ill will" over Nor Azah's appointment as a senator.

In the High Court today, counsel for the defendant R. Thayakugan and Ramesh N.P. Chandran asked Justice Datuk Dr R.K. Nathan for an extension to file their affidavits in reply.

The judge fixed May 16 for case management.