

Guan Eng sues Utusan for defamation
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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has filed a civil suit in the Penang High Court today against Umno-owned daily Utusan Malaysia over an allegedly defamatory article on the DAP.

Lim (left) decided to sue Utusan after an article in the daily last month described the DAP as the tool of a foreign government and called for the party to be banned.

Earlier, the chief minister had sent a letter of demand to the Malay daily asking it to withdraw certain words said to be slanderous in the article titled Kebiadaban Guan Eng (Guan Eng's insolence).

He has also sent seven other letters to the newspaper company and in which he denied that the DAP was anti-Malay or playing racial politics.

Utusan had also accused Lim of being a 'racist' and 'anti-Malay' in the article that ran the day after the Pakatan Rakyat convention in Kepala Batas last month.

Lim in his earlier notices of demand denied the allegations, and is seeking a published apology and compensation from Utusan for defaming him.

He blamed the newspaper for turning a blind eye to various clarifications related to allegedly malicious articles condemning the Pakatan government.

"Utusan Malaysia and lies are like twins... they cannot be separated," he quipped.

At the courthouse today, Lim was accompanied by Dato Keramat assemblyperson and lawyer Jagdeep Singh Deo (right) as well as several state exco members and assemblypersons.

On the amount of compensation sought, Lim said he would leave the matter to the judge.

"If we win, whatever we receive will be donated to the programme for poverty eradication," he told reporters.

History of antagonism

In his suit against the newspaper, Lim wants Utusan to pay compensation as it did not verify its sources and disregarded the feelings of the Utusan, he claimed, has deliberately and maliciously destroyed the reputation of the DAP and aggravated the injury it has suffered.

The Malay daily has consistently attacked the chief minister and the DAP ever since the state fell into opposition hands in the last general election.

It had, on occasion, published remarks by Umno leaders who, among others, called DAP the "king of racism".

Other Utusan Malaysia's claims include accusing the Penang chief minister of banning a Maulidur Rasul procession, preventing Malay traders from participating in the Ramadan bazaar in Komtar and demolishing several villages.

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