

Anwar sues Utusan for RM150mil
MalaysiaKini.com
January 20,2012
S Pathmawathy

Anwar Ibrahim has filed a RM150 million defamation suit against Umno-owned Utusan Malaysia, claiming the newspaper has been "concocting lies" about him wanting to legalise homosexuality.

joint action group utusan malaysia memo politik baru ybJ 241008 02In the statement of claim filed by M/s Daim & Gamany, the opposition leader is demanding RM50 million in damages, as well as other costs to be determined by the court.

Lawyer and PKR vice-president N Surendran told reporters after filing the suit today that they will also be requesting the court to award RM50 million for aggravated damages and another RM50 million in exemplary damages.

"We are demanding such a high amount because the allegations went international and have also affected Anwar's image as a statesman," Surendran said.

Anwar named Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Bhd and the Malay-language daily's editor-in-chief Abdul Aziz Ishak as defendants.

Chastised by Hasan Ali

Utusan had carried a front-page article titled "Tolak Anwar - Hasan" on Jan 17, in which the Permatang Pauh MP and PKR de facto leader was chastised by recently sacked former Selangor PAS commissioner Hasan Ali.

Hasan attacked Anwar for questioning the country's anti-homosexuality laws and for allegedly wanting to legalise lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) activities.

It also published another article on the same day, titled "Parasit ancam PAS, Anwar mesti tolak", on page 10.

Hasan's comments came after Anwar's interview was aired over the BBC last week, in which he called for a review of "archaic laws" of the country.

"We, Muslims and non-Muslims generally believe and (are) committed to support the sanctity of marriage between men and women in Malaysia.

NONE"But we should not be seen as punitive and consider the archaic laws as relevant. We need to review them. We do not promote homosexuality in public sphere and domain.

"We will not make apologies towards that... I think to use this sort of legislation to be punitive, punishing innocent people cannot be condoned or be tolerated," read Surendran (right) quoting Anwar's interview.

Surendran added that the lawyers sent a letter of demand to Utusan on Jan 17 asking for a retraction, apology and damages within 48 hours.

"I just got a fax from Utusan yesterday that they are looking into it, that's all," he said.

He pointed out that Utusan had published the article on its front-page "to cause maximum damage and embarrassment" to Anwar.

He said that these attacks on Anwar were also an attack on the reputation of Pakatan Rakyat as the federal opposition.

He also took potshots at prime minister and Umno president Najib Abdul Razak for allowing the newspaper to "continue publishing lies".

"If you want to see the real face of Najib, read Utusan Malaysia.

"Utusan is just like the Nazi newspapers that used to publish Adolf Hitler's lies," Surendran added.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/187135>