

Badrolamin had to forgo visits due to 'harassment'

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Former Internal Security Act (ISA) detainee Badrolamin Bahron chose to forgo visits from his family during his incarceration because they were used by his interrogators to harass him, the Kuala Lumpur High Court was told yesterday.

During cross-examination by senior federal counsel Nor Mastura Ayub, Badrolamin said he was vigorously scrutinised by the investigation officers during the second and fourth week of his detention.

Badrolamin (left), who was held at a unspecified police remand centre for 55 days, told the court that he felt under duress due to the investigation officers' actions.

"When I met my wife, I couldn't help but to utter emotional words, but even a simple greetings which I asked my wife to convey to friends would be an issue (for the officers).

"I could not even blink before my wife. After that, the officers would use this to question whether I have said any negative things to my wife.

"(The way the official behaved) made it even more stressful for me after seeing my family," he told the court.

When the investigation officers gave him a third chance to meet his family, Badrolamin said he turned it down to escape the alleged harassment.

Wrote false letters

Badrolamin is one of five plaintiffs in a civil suit seeking to declare their 2001 detention under Section 8 and Section 73 of the ISA unconstitutional. They are also seeking an unspecified sum in compensation.

The religious scholar and lecturer joined PKR in its earliest incarnation, then known as Parti Keadilan Nasional, back in 1999 and was arrested on April 20, 2001 during a reformasi-themed ceramah.

Badrolamin revealed that during one of the visits by his family, he had asked his wife Zumrah Hosni to tell reformasi activists to continue their struggle, but this upset the investigation officers.

Upon further queries by Nor Mastura, Badrolamin said he was instructed to write a letter to a high-ranking police official as well as his wife to express regret over what she had done.

Badrolamin said that although he had "willingly" written the letter, he said he did not believe in the contents and merely complied with the hope that it would expedite his freedom.

"Yes, I wrote that out of my own will, but it was a red herring," he said.

Badrolamin also claimed that he signed a 133-page document from the police without reading it for the same reason.

Did press misquote IGP?

Later, federal counsel Azizan Iznaz suggested to Badrolamin that his suit may have been based on news reports which misinterpreted statements by then inspector-general of police Norian Mai.

Azizan was referring to media reports by the Malay Mail, New Straits Times and Berita Harian which

appeared in mid-April 2001, quoting Norian as saying that Badrolamin was detained over an alleged plot to topple the government through violence.

Badrolamin however disagreed.

“Despite the different headlines, the three reports essentially said the same things,” he said.

The witness also disagreed with the federal counsel’s suggestion that his speeches about “change” at a time when the country was going through an “unstable” period would incite the public.

“We were not the cause of the chaos. The chaos took place because of the slandering against (sacked deputy prime minister) Anwar Ibrahim (by the authorities), which had been known to the world,” he said.

When asked to clarify a speech he gave before, in which he labelled former premier Mahathir Mohamad as “anti-ulama”, Badrolamin said the former PM was prone to slandering his enemies.

“In Islam, slander is a major sin. The context of my speech was that (Mahathir) had been slandering Anwar Ibrahim and stopping the ulama from speaking up, that’s why he was anti-ulama,” he said.

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