

Zahid Hamidi fails to strike out assault suit, again
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The Court of Appeal today dismissed with costs an application by Defence Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi to strike out a suit brought by a businessman who allegedly had an affair with the minister's married daughter.

A three-member panel led by Zaleha Zahari unanimously maintained the ruling of the Shah Alam High Court, and ordered the minister to pay RM5,000 in costs.

The other members of the panel were Clement Allan Skinner and Aziah Ali.

Businessman Amir Bazli Abdullah, 40, filed the suit on July 4, 2007, claiming that he was beaten up by Ahmad Zahid on Jan 16, 2006.

The court arrived at the decision after hearing the submission from Shamsul Bahari Ibrahim, who represented Ahmad Zahid, and ruled that it wasn't necessary for Amir Bazli's counsel, Karpal Singh, to make his submission.

Shamsul Bahari in his submission disputed the claim as to who had hit Amir Bazli, who had at first said Ahmad Zahid had hit him, and later pointed at others.

The lawyer argued that the plaintiff must identify and prove that he was hit by the respondent.

Justice Aziah dismissed such a notion, saying that the plaintiff had maintained that he was assaulted, and the question of who had hit him would be determined by the court.

Following this, Ahmad Zahid can either appeal to the apex court, or go back to the case management process before the High Court, in preparation for a civil trial.

'Hard blow to the businessman's face'

In the plaintiff's pleading, Ahmad Zahid, who was then deputy information minister, hit a hard blow to the businessman's face after having his agents bring the businessman to the Kajang Country Heights recreation club from a petrol station in Bangi, at approximately 10pm on Jan 16, 2006.

Due to the impact, the businessman is said had suffered a broken nose and a swollen left eye.

The minister's agents were alleged to have also beaten him with a hard object, causing severe injuries to his face.

Amir Bazli also claimed that Ahmad Zahid had repeatedly threatened to kill him, saying "Kau akan ditanam" (You will be buried), while the agents were also said to have threatened him as well.

An agent by the name of Hisham also allegedly uttered the threatening words, "Aku dah ingatkan kau, aku sanggup mandi darah dengan kau," (I've already told you, I am willing to bathe in blood with you).

Ahmad Zahid was alleged to have ordered his men to take Amir Bazli back to his house at Country Heights and to confine him illegally, before eventually releasing him at 2am the next day.

The minister's daughter Nurul Hidayah, who is married to Azreen Mohd Nasir, is said to have had an affair with Amir Bazli.

'Defending family honour'

Although the plaintiff had claimed to be beaten by a few men, he named Ahmad Zahid as the only respondent.

The plaintiff, however, did not specify the amount of compensation.

He claimed to have suffered fractures in his facial bone, nasal bone, frontal bone, deviated nasal septum, and the permanent injuries had made his face appear maimed.

Ahmad Zahid had applied to strike out the suit on Aug 29 last year, claiming the plaintiff was lying and had portrayed him as a violent man. However, this was dismissed by the High Court.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Zahid in his statement of defence denied assaulting the plaintiff.

However, he admitted that one or two family members may, by chance, have beaten the plaintiff as claimed by the man.

"One or both family members (may) have done that for the purpose of defending and protecting the family honour and fidelity which had been affected, as the plaintiff had shamed our family," Ahmad Zahid said in his defence.

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