

Umno owns 50 percent of Utusan Melayu Bhd
MalaysiaKini.com
Aug 13, 2012
By Hafiz Yatim

An annual report on media company Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd, which publishes Utusan Malaysia, reveals that it is 49.77 percent owned by Umno or its nominee companies.

Prime minister Najib Abdul Razak's press secretary Tengku Sharifuddin Tengku Ahmad is also one of the directors of Utusan Melayu, Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim revealed in the High Court in Kuala Lumpur today in his defamation suit against the daily.

"I know this because Tengku Sharifuddin is the one who represented the government in signing a deal with (public relations) firm Apco in Washington. He is not a director-general of a department but signed on behalf of the government by virtue of being the PM's press secretary."

"Utusan chairperson Hashim Ahmad Makinuddin and director Professor Firdaus Abdullah are known to be Umno members.

"Hence, why appoint them there if it is not Umno that controls Utusan? Furthermore you have the PM's press secretary also as a director," Anwar said.

The opposition leader had two year's ago revealed Najib's dealing with Apco - where he alleged of the firm's links with Israel in mooted the 1Malaysia concept.

Anwar said it was not necessary for an entity to own 51 percent of a company to say that it controlled that company, for even a 33 percent stake was sufficient for control.

In this case, he said, Umno owned 49.77 percent of the shares in Utusan Melayu.

'Maligned by Utusan for 14 years'

For the past 14 years, Anwar added, he had been maligned by Utusan and this was done to fulfill the Umno agenda, as the party found him a threat.

"I have been branded a Jewish and also an American agent by the daily. Recently, a cleric was also reported to have said that supporting DAP, which is associated with Pakatan Rakyat, is haram," he said.

Replying to questions from his counsel N Surendran during re-examination, Anwar said this showed that Utusan did not subscribe to the true trends of journalism.

The politician, who celebrated his 65th birthday last week, said when testifying in his defamation suit against Utusan Malaysia for alluding him to be a proponent of homosexuality in conservative Muslim-majority Malaysia.

The daily reported this when quoting former Selangor PAS commissioner Hasan Ali (above, right), who was sacked by the party and removed as a Selangor state executive councillor, calling on Malaysians to reject Anwar for his immoral activities.

Hasan said he based this on Anwar's interview with BBC, in which Hasan said Anwar called for a review of laws relating to homosexuality so as not to be punitive in nature.

Anwar had earlier promised to provide proof of the Umno-Utusan link during the last hearing.

Hasan: Anwar condones homosexuality

Meanwhile former Selangor PAS chief and exco member Hasan Ali described what he understood Anwar's interview with the BBC to mean - that the opposition leader was supporting homosexuality.

"This is the reason I said that I can no longer be with Anwar and the opposition as he was condoning homosexuals," he said in replying to questions from Utusan Malaysia's counsel Firoz Hussein Ahmad Jamaluddin.

Shown by Firoz the article by Utusan Malaysia which had reported his press conference, Hasan admitted what was reported in the daily was correct.

He added what he understood over Anwar's description when the politician said in the BBC interview that "we will have to review archaic laws and we, Muslims and non-Muslims generally believe and committed to support the sanctity of marriage between man and woman in Malaysia", was that the Permatang Pauh MP was opposed to Islamic laws.

"This I find as truly unacceptable as I have always maintained that Islamic laws are not archaic and can be implemented until doomsday," he said.

Quizzed by Surendran under cross-examination, Hasan, 65, said he held the opposing view with Anwar not because he had a crisis with Pakatan Rakyat.

Hasan said he found what Anwar had said in the interview objectionable and that was why he had made a strong statement against the PKR de-facto leader.

He disagreed when Surendran tried to show that what Anwar had actually meant was that he was not supportive of homosexuality as the opposition leader was committed to the sanctity of marriage between man and woman, Hasan replied that was not what he understood from the article.

Asked by presiding judge Justice VT Singham whether he had sought clarification from Anwar before making the statement, the Gombak Setia assemblyperson admitted he did not do so.

Asked further why he did not seek clarification from Anwar, Hasan felt there was no need to do so as he had understood what the article reported by BBC meant.

Hearing before Justice Singham continues on Oct 23.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd

Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/206208>