

Najib vs Mkini lawsuit sees change of judge
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's suit against Mkini Dotcom Sdn Bhd, which operates news portal Malaysiakini, will be heard before a different judge.

The matter was discovered today when the case came up before deputy registrar Norfauzani Mohd Nordin.

When Malaysiakini received the suit filed by the firm Hafarizam, Aishah and Mubarak on June 3, the papers served by the firm stated that the matter is fixed for case management before High Court judge SM Komathy Suppiah.

However, according to Malaysiakini's lawyer Ashok Kandiah, the case went before deputy registrar Norfauzani today.

"It was during the meeting that the deputy registrar said the matter is fixed before judicial commissioner Kamaluddin Md Said," Ashok said.

Asked about the change in judge, the lawyer for Najib and Umno, Wan Azmir Wan Majid, said he was not sure whether the original judge was supposed to be Justice Komathy.

Before being elevated as a judicial commissioner, Kamaluddin headed the Trial and Appeals Division of the Attorney-General's Chambers.

Case management fixed for July 24

The High Court also fixed July 1 for Malaysiakini to file its defence statement.

Najib, along with Umno executive secretary Abdul Rauf Yusof and the party, are supposed to file their replies by July 15.

Ashok (left) said the case is fixed for case management on July 24, and he told reporters that he would seek instructions from Malaysiakini on whether to apply to strike out the suit.

Najib and Abdul Rauf early this month filed a suit over comments made by Malaysiakini readers in two Yoursay articles over last month's short-lived Terengganu political imbroglio.

Justice Kamaluddin is also appointed as the judge scheduled to hear P Balasubramaniam wife's suit against Najib, his wife Rosmah Mansor and seven others.

Last Saturday, lawyer Americk Sidhu announced that Balasubramaniam's widow and their three children had filed the suit against Najib and the eight others.

NOTE: The accompanying letter to the 30-page Writ of Summons and Statement of Claim states that the case will go before High Court judge SM Komathy Suppiah.

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