

**Khalid sues The Malaysian Insider for defamation
MalaysiaKini.com
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Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim filed a defamation suit yesterday against news portal The Malaysian Insider for running a series of articles and commentaries against him as if it was running an “anti-Khalid” campaign.

Among others, they questioned Abdul Khalid's out-of-court resolution to the RM70 million Bank Islam loan where he had filed a counter-claim against the bank, and also his handling of the controversial Kinrara-Damansara Expressway (Kidex)

Abdul Khalid filed the suit through his lawyer New Sin Yew from legal firm Bon Advocates at the Kuala Lumpur High Court. He named the portal's chief executive officer and editor Jahabar Sadiq and its Bahasa Malaysia editor, Amin Shah Iskandar, as defendants.

Also named was The Edge Communications Sdn Bhd, which has last month acquired the news portal for an undisclosed sum.

The commentary/articles which Khalid said were defamatory are:
'Going by Selangor ruler's criteria, Khalid should quit as MB' (July 24)

'Let Pakatan Rakyat decide Selangor MB post, not Umno' (July 17), where the article questioned Khalid's settlement regarding the Bank Islam's loan;

'Selangor MB must clear the air over loan deal' (June 9)

'Won't Selcat look into Khalid's deals?' (July 4)

'Will Kidex be Khalid's highway to hell' (June 20)

'Is the government running scared of religious authorities?' (June 15)

'When a tasteless and misogynist remark shows up Umno's fear' (July 15)
Facing pressure to quit

Khalid in his statement of claim alleged the publication of the articles had resulted in the readers and public to pressure him to quit as MB.

“The defendants had published the articles to sensationalise the issue. The portal had acted mala fide in publishing it to advance its commercial interests,” he said.

The Selangor MB claimed that the articles had tarnished him as MB and Port Klang

assembly person as well as Bandar Tun Razak MP.

“This had also affected my reputation as a politician, corporate figure, and a deputy presidential candidate for PKR and subjected me to public scorn,” the statement claimed.

Khalid said the publication of those articles had among others meant that he is “untrustworthy, not ethical, is corrupt, has a bad personality, unprincipled, does not have integrity, should not be the Selangor MB and should relinquish his state chief executive post”.

Khalid, who got a boost yesterday when he secured the Selangor sultan's nod to remain as Selangor MB, is seeking an injunction to bar the portal from repeating the allegations.

He is also seeking aggravated and exemplary damages and a withdrawal of the articles in question.

Insider stands by commentaries

TMI's editor and chief executive officer, Jahabar, in an immediate response said they have yet to receive the legal claim till today.

“TMI has responded to the letter of demand from Khalid's lawyers and will vigorously defend any lawsuit if it is filed. TMI, its owners and editors are mystified that there are reports of such a defamation suit as there has been no such notification.

“We are also puzzled that TMI is seen ‘as if it was running an ‘anti-Khalid’ campaign’, as reported by the Malaysiakini news portal when we have endeavoured to cover all sides of the Selangor menteri besar issue,” he said.

Jahabar said the portal attempted to interview Khalid over the issues he has mentioned and on-going developments but there has not been a favourable response from his office.

Hence, he said that they will go to court to defend its report and commentaries and expects a full and open testimony on issues that surround Khalid and clear all doubts, including the settlement of his Bank Islam loan.

“Khalid holds a high public office as the Selangor MB and he cannot conceal details of his out-of-court settlement on grounds that it is a private matter. He is not a private citizen who does not have to explain his dealings to the public,” Jahabar said.

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