

Apandi's dismissal suit: Dr M 'mystified' by secret settlement terms

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Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he was “mystified” by Putrajaya’s decision not to reveal the details of the settlement with former attorney-general Mohamed Apandi Ali over compensation for the latter’s dismissal from his post.

Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Azalina Othman Said recently said in a written parliamentary reply that legal counsels to both parties in the matter had agreed to conceal the terms of the settlement during their negotiations.

“I am mystified by the decision of Azalina to make a secret of the settlement of Apandi’s (above, left) demand for compensation for his dismissal.

“Apandi, the former AG under Najib Abdul Razak’s government, made his demand publicly. He even named the amount of RM2.23 million.

“Yet the compensation the government made is a secret. Why? I have reason to find out why because I do not think he deserves to be compensated at all,” Mahathir said in a series of tweets today.

On Feb 14, Azalina said in a written parliamentary reply that the matter has been put under the Official Secrets Act 1972, in accordance with the agreement that the terms of the settlement be kept secret.

The minister was responding to Ipoh Barat MP M Kula Segaran who asked for the amount of compensation paid to Apandi in the settlement.

Apandi's termination

During Mahathir's stint as prime minister in the previous Pakatan Harapan administration, he terminated Apandi's service as the AG in June 2018 amid the 1MDB probe.

On Oct 13, 2020, Apandi filed a suit against Mahathir and the government over his alleged unlawful termination as AG.

On April 13, 2022, Apandi and the government reached an amicable settlement over the lawsuit.

Mahathir has since maintained that he made the right decision in sacking Apandi and that the matter was done according to procedure.

“I was shocked to read the news about the out-of-court settlement being made between the government and Apandi recently.

“I was not informed about the settlement even though I was a key witness,” the nonagenarian said back when news of the settlement broke.

In response, AG Idrus Harun said that Mahathir was informed of the terms of the settlement.

“I can only confirm that Mahathir wrote recently seeking information on the terms of the settlement. I already replied to inform him,” he added.

Apandi had also said that Mahathir had no right to question the settlement despite naming the veteran politician as a party in his suit.

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