

PM gets two more weeks to file defence against Mahathir's suit

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Hidir Reduan Abdul Rashid

The High Court in Shah Alam today granted two more weeks for Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim to file his statement of defence against former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad's RM150 million defamation suit.

If the Pakatan Harapan chairperson was not allowed the extension, the defendant would need to file his statement of defence today.

The PKR president's counsel Alliff Benjamin Suhaimi confirmed the outcome of the case management before the High Court registry earlier today.

"We got two weeks (extension to run from today). The matter is fixed for case management on July 7," the lawyer said when contacted by the media.

Mahathir's lawyer Muhammad Rafique Rashid Ali also confirmed the matter.

The lawyer said they had Mahathir's instructions to object against the initial bid by Anwar for a one-month extension of time, adding that it was because this is a

public interest matter and was of utmost urgency for the suit to be heard as soon as possible.

Rafique added that the civil court in the end decided to grant the two-week extension to the defendant.

The former Langkawi MP filed the lawsuit against Anwar on May 3 over claims that the former had amassed wealth for personal riches while in power.

The civil action was over Anwar's policy speech at the party's special national congress on March 18.

Through the lawsuit, the plaintiff alleged, among others, that Anwar made untrue and baseless statements with the intent to create a negative perception against him.

Mahathir also claimed that the allegation had not only ruined his image and reputation but also brought shame upon himself as well as his family members.

Mahathir contended that his children succeeded in the world of business without his intervention or any abuse of power by him as then-prime minister.

The plaintiff is seeking RM50 million in general damages and RM100 million in

exemplary damages, as well as a court order for Anwar to issue a written apology and for the immediate retraction of the allegations.

The plaintiff is also seeking five percent annual interest on the damages awarded to be calculated from the date of filing the civil action until full settlement of payment of compensation, costs, and any other relief the court deems fit.

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