

Anwar allowed to amend suit against Anifah
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Anwar Ibrahim was today allowed to amend his statement of claim to specifically name Foreign Minister Anifah Aman as the defendant in his RM100 million defamation suit.

Initially, in the statement of claim, Anwar named Anifah in his personal capacity as first defendant, the foreign minister as second defendant and the Malaysian government as third defendant.

With the amendment, Anifah was named in his official capacity as the foreign minister.

Judicial Commissioner Prasad Sandosham Abraham ordered counsel SN Nair to file the amended statement of claim within two weeks after granting Nair's application.

The issue over who should be named as the defendants in the suit was raised when senior federal counsel Amarjeet Singh, for the foreign minister and the government (third defendant) submitted on their application to strike out the suit.

Amarjeet Singh said Anwar had to choose whom he wanted to be named as the defendants in the suit as the first defendant (Anifah) and second defendant (foreign minister) were the same person.

He said the first defendant had appointed Shafee & Co as solicitor in his personal capacity.

He said the government was wrongly made a party because nowhere in the suit was it stated that the government was vicariously liable to the first and second defendants.

On May 27, 2009, Anwar filed the suit against Anifah over his statement at a news conference in Washington, on May 16, 2009.

Anwar, who is also the PKR advisor, is seeking RM100 million in compensatory damages, aggravated damages and exemplary damages and an injunction to restrain the defendants from further saying, writing or publishing the alleged defamatory words.

In his statement of claim, Anwar said that Anifah, at a joint news conference with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the US Department of State in Washington, made a statement that Anwar had offered him the post of deputy prime minister if Anwar were to set up the government on Sept 16, 2008.

Anwar also claimed that Anifah had defamed him by saying that he was attempting to buy over the MPs and was tarnishing the country's image.

He said Anifah had sown hatred and anger towards him among the public, lowered his status, encouraged and started political contempt, clouded the truth and spread falsehoods.

- Bernama