

Ex-MACC chief denies defaming Khalid
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Former Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) chief commissioner Ahmad Said Hamdan denied making defamatory statement against Selangor Menteri Besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim on its investigations into alleged corruption and power abuse by the latter.

He said he had uttered the words in the statement which was claimed to be defamatory in good faith and without ill-intent to damage Abdul Khalid's reputation and image.

The words were uttered in response to questions from media representatives during a media conference held on Feb 20, 2009 on the progress of MACC's investigations into alleged corruption and power abuse by the menteri besar, said Ahmad Said in his defence statement.

The defence statement, filed on July 31 last year, was in response to a suit filed by Abdul Khalid against him, the MACC and the government pertaining to the outcome of the commission's investigations into the alleged power abuse by Abdul Khalid.

In the defence statement, which was obtained by the media today, Ahmad Said said he had issued the statement concerned in his capacity as the MACC head and was fulfilling his responsibility to inform the progress of the investigation of the case to the public.

Alternatively, he said, the statement was made on occasion of qualified privilege.

In his suit, Khalid claimed that the disclosure made by Ahmad during the press conference was libellous.

Personal car and 46 cows

He is seeking compensatory damages, aggravated damages, exemplary damages, general damages and special damages, and an injunction to prevent the defendants from repeating the alleged defamatory words.

During the conference, Ahmad Said had told the media on the progress of the commission's investigations into the alleged power abuse by Abdul Khalid over the maintenance of his personal car and purchase of 46 cows for Hari Raya Aidiladha for the Bandar Tun Razak parliamentary constituency.

In the statement of claim, Abdul Khalid claimed that the statement meant that he was a liar, unprincipled, corrupt, unethical and an unfit politician who had committed a criminal offence.

He said the statement instigated public hatred against him and lowered his esteem in the eyes of the public.

He also claimed that MACC had acted beyond its powers and by its actions, had effectively usurped the exclusive powers and functions of the attorney-general.

High Court deputy registrar Anisah Normah Muhammad Nor set Jan 26 next year for case management when the case came up for mention before her today.

Lawyer Wan Anuar Shadat Mohamed Amin represented Abdul Khalid, while senior federal counsel Habibah Harun represented Ahmad Said.

- Bernama

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