

RM110mil law suit against Khairy, Chandra
Malaysiakini.com
Mar 05, 2008
K Kabilan

PKR de facto MCPX leader Anwar Ibrahim has instructed his lawyers to initiate defamation proceedings against Umno Youth deputy chief Khairy Jamaluddin and former PKR deputy president Chandra Muzaffar over their recent remarks against him.

Apart from a public apology, he is also seeking RM100 million from Khairy and RM10 million from Chandra each for allegedly tarnishing his reputation.

sankara nairAnwar's lawyer SN Nair (left) yesterday sent demand letters to Khairy and Chandra, asking them to retract the offending remarks and to give an undertaking that they will not repeat the allegations and comments.

khairy jamaluddin interview 011107 assuresNair pointed out that Khairy (right), during a ceramah on Feb 20 in Lembah Pantai, had given listeners the impression that Anwar is a homosexual, and a man of low morals who also has no Islamic values.

"The allegations in the articles and the comments against our client amount to a very serious libel on our client and have caused him considerable distress and embarrassment in the light of the case against our client in PP v Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim whereby he was acquitted," said Nair in the demand letter to Khairy.

"These allegations made against him are false and your attack on him is wholly unjustified."

In the other letter, Nair similarly said Chandra's comments as published in the New Straits Times on March 4 implied that Anwar "was and is promoting and inciting racial hatred amongst the races in Malaysia" and had committed criminal offences of sedition.

chandra muzaffarNair was referring to remarks made at a forum on March 3. Chandra (left) had reportedly said that, based on his personal experience with Anwar, the latter would not be the right choice as prime minister.

Chandra went on to say that Anwar is deceiving the public with his multi-racial attitude and that he is now "speaking differently" from when he was in government.

anwar ibrahim and pkr speechAnwar had been sacked in September 1998 from all his government and Umno posts by then premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad. He was later convicted of corrupt practice and jailed for six years, but another conviction for sodomy was overturned on appeal.

48 hours to respond

Nair said Khairy and Chandra were "grossly negligent and reckless" in their remarks, with the intention to expose Anwar to public hatred and ridicule.

He also said the duo were moved by bad faith and were seeking cheap publicity and sensationalism by making the remarks.

"These allegations made against him are false and malicious and your attack on him is wholly unjustified," Nair wrote in the letter.

Khairy and Chandra have been given 48 hours - until tomorrow - to reply, failing which "our instructions are to institute legal proceedings".

nallakaruppanAnother former ally, KS Nallakaruppan, has also spoken to the media, criticising Anwar as caring only about himself.

Barisan Nasional head Abdullah Ahmad Badawi joined the fray yesterday, claiming that Anwar had done nothing for the people when he was education minister.

Backing for Anwar

However, Anwar's PKR colleagues and other allies rose to his defence today.

syed husinPKR deputy president Dr Syed Husin Ali said the attacks only demonstrated "that his message of hope for a better Malaysia is resonating with an exponentially increasing number of Malaysians".

"The timing of these statements that are continuously highlighted in the BN-owned media unfortunately raise serious questions as to each accuser's motives and integrity," he said.

"I have known Anwar personally since he was a student in Universiti Malaya during the period I was teaching there.

"(I) can bear witness that, whatever his choices throughout his political career, Anwar has consistently stood for the rights of the downtrodden and for integrity in public office."

vk lingam hearing wee choo keong pc thirunama 180108 sternMalaysian Democratic Party secretary-general Wee Choo Keong also lambasted Chandra for allowing himself to be manipulated by the BN in casting aspersions on Anwar and to indirectly influence Malaysians not to support the opposition.

"We call upon Chandra to carry on being an armchair critic in his academic 'prison' and to immediately stop insulting the intelligence of the public," said Wee who is contesting the Wangsa Maju parliamentary seat under the PKR banner.

Chandra's response

Chandra, in an immediate response to Anwar's letter, issued a statement to Malaysiakini stating that he stood by his remarks and would defend them in any court of law.

"I have already responded to his threat to initiate legal proceedings against me.

"I have written to his lawyer stating clearly that "I do not find any reason whatsoever to retract any of the statements that I have made at the said forum or to apologise" to Anwar Ibrahim," he said.

"The remarks I had made are fully borne out by facts and information within my personal knowledge. I stand by my remarks and will defend them in any court of law," he added.

He said that it was out of "a sense of duty as a citizen and a voter" that he expressed his opinion about Anwar's role as a politician and public figure.

"I would have failed in my responsibility to my fellow citizens and my nation if I had continued to maintain my silence about him," he said.

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