

New panel to hear Anwar's suit against Mahathir
Malaysiakini.com
Mac 1, 2010

A new Federal Court quorum will be constituted to hear Anwar Ibrahim's leave application for leave to appeal against the dismissal of his RM100 million defamation suit against former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

This followed the decision by two of the three judges to recuse themselves from hearing the application, which was scheduled for today, at the request of Anwar's counsel, Karpal Singh.

Karpal Singh had sought the recusal of Justices Hashim Yusoff and Zulkefli Ahmad Makinuddin on the ground that they had previously heard Anwar's civil suit against Dr Mahathir on his dismissal from his cabinet posts, which involved the same parties.

Chief Judge of Malaya Arifin Zakaria adjourned the matter to next week, and said that the parties in the matter would be notified of the hearing date.

Earlier, VK Lingam, counsel for Dr Mahathir submitted that to disqualify a judge, Anwar must demonstrate that there were circumstances that gave rise to real danger of bias.

Anwar, is seeking leave to appeal against the Court of Appeal's decision on Oct 10 last year which rejected his appeal on technical grounds.

The Court of Appeal had held that the memorandum of appeal filed by Anwar in English language was defective and invalid and that court documents must be filed in Bahasa Malaysia.

Anwar brought legal action against Dr Mahathir in January 2006 for making a defamatory remark against him at the Malaysian Human Rights Conference on Sept 9, 2005.

In 2007, the Kuala Lumpur High Court allowed Dr Mahathir's application to strike out the suit. Anwar was unsuccessful in his appeal at the Court of Appeal.

Outside the court, Karpal Singh told reporters that the Federal Court would decide next Monday in Anwar's final appeal relating to his dismissal from cabinet posts in 1998.

In that case, the PKR advisor is seeking an order from the court to declare that his dismissal as deputy prime minister and finance minister by Dr Mahathir was unlawful and that he be compensated in lieu of reinstatement.

- *Bernama*

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/125374>