

**D-day for deputy minister in defamation suit**  
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The Kuala Lumpur High Court will decide on April 26 whether or not to strike out the defence statement of Deputy Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Hamzah Zainuddin.

The document was said to be filed beyond the stipulated time in response to a RM10 million defamation suit by Anwar Ibrahim.

NONEAnwar's lawyer Sankara Nair (left in photo) said senior assistant registrar Fatimah Rabiyah Ali fixed the date for the matter to be heard before Judicial Commissioner Prasad Sandosham Abraham.

"We had applied for Hamzah's defence to be struck off as it was filed beyond the stipulated time. Furthermore, the deputy minister has failed to provide particulars to his claims," the lawyer said after case management today.

Counsel S Murali appeared for Hamzah, who is alleged to have made the defamatory remark several days before the Permatang Pauh by-election in 2008. He was deputy housing and local government minister at the time.

hamzah zainuddinOn Aug 19, 2008, Chinese-language daily Kwong Wah Jit Poh quoted Hamzah (left) as saying that Anwar had mengacau isteri (made a move on his wife). When Hamzah failed to apologise, Anwar filed the suit.

In his statement of claim, Anwar said the remark had given the impression that he had engaged in illicit sexual activity, is a man of low morals, does not have Islamic values and is of bad character.

Hamzah's statement was also deemed defamatory in that he told voters in Permatang Pauh not to vote for Anwar.

The PKR de facto leader contested - and won - the by-election to make his political comeback after serving out a five-year ban following his jail sentence for corrupt practice.

Anwar is now Opposition Leader in the Dewan Rakyat.

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