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Najib gets stay of proceedings on RM2.6b lawsuit

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THE Kuala Lumpur High Court has granted Umno president Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak a stay in all proceedings relating to a lawsuit filed by ex-Umno member Anina Saadudin on the RM2.6 billion deposited into his personal account.

Justice Datuk Mohd Zaki Abdul Wahab ruled the decision in the chambers yesterday.

Najib's counsel Datuk Mohd Hafarizam Harun told *The Malaysian Reserve* the ruling was made to allow the application to strike out the lawsuit to be heard first.

Prior to this, the court had

fixed Oct 6 for the case management on the striking out application.

Mohd Hafarizam who also represents Umno executive secretary Datuk Ab Rauf Yusoh said both leaders would not need to file for their statement of defence for now.

"We will still need to file for defence statement if the court dismisses the application," he said.

Mohd Hafarizam also said among the grounds of the striking out application is that Anina has no *locus standi* (legal standing) to file for the lawsuit as she was no longer

a party member.

He said issues relating to political parties cannot be challenged in court as stipulated under Section 18C of the Societies Act.

Anina filed a lawsuit against Najib and Ab Rauf at the Kuala Lumpur High Court on Aug 28.

In the suit she claimed that the sum of money did not appear in Umno's audited accounts in either 2013 or 2014 and she seeks US\$650 million repayment.

She also alleged that Najib breached the Umno constitution under the provisions of the Societies Act, 1966.

"I believe Datuk Seri Mohd Najib has committed a breach of trust and violated the party's constitution in accepting and spending the RM2.6 billion," she said.

Anina is represented by Mohamed Hanif Khatri Abdulla.

Anina lost her Umno membership on Sept 2 for filing her lawsuit against the party.

She has since filed a separate lawsuit to challenge her sacking and on Sept 18, she also filed applications to freeze Najib's assets and judgment for admission. — *by* AZREEN HANI