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Anwar sacked for wanting to topple Dr M, court told

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KUALA LUMPUR: An official from a government think tank told the High Court that Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was sacked from his official positions in 1998 because he wanted to topple Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Datuk Lokman Noor Adam, 43, who was the fourth witness in the trial of the RM100mil defamation suit filed by Anwar against Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, was giving his evidence.

Khairy had testified that his political speech on Feb 19, 2008, only implied that Anwar could not be trusted in his political relationships.

Questioned by Khairy's lead counsel Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee

Abdullah yesterday, Lokman said Anwar's then political secretary Mohamad Ezam Mohd Nor had told him and two others about the plan when they gathered at a hotel in Batu Pahat after Umno's general assembly in 1998.

He said Mohamad Ezam informed them that he (Ezam) was there on behalf of Anwar.

"Mohamad Ezam said Anwar couldn't stand Dr Mahathir and wanted to persuade us to be part of Anwar's machinery to go for the presidency," Lokman said.

Mohamad Ezam claimed that Anwar disagreed with Dr Mahathir in terms of economic and political policies, he added.

"I went to see the special officer of Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi to verify whether Anwar

wanted to backstab Dr Mahathir.

"I wanted to know whether it was the movement of Ezam or Anwar," he said, adding that he later met with the special officer, who confirmed the matter.

"The officer was called to the Deputy Prime Minister's (Anwar) office and Anwar mentioned the same thing. He was ready to go against Dr Mahathir and wanted to go for the presidency," he said.

Asked about his next conduct, Lokman said he was asked by another person to go to Anwar's official residence on Sept 2, 1998.

"At that time, I was informed that Anwar may be sacked from being Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister," he said.

Lokman also said he was there when three policemen delivered a

letter on Sept 2, 1998, over the sacking.

"I am saying he was sacked as his movement was to topple Dr Mahathir," he said, adding that he was sacked from Umno on Oct 6, 1998, which caused him to join Parti Keadilan Rakyat.

To a question, he said Anwar was his idol until he was betrayed by his party in 2004.

The hearing before High Court Judicial Commissioner Azizul Azmi Adnan will continue tomorrow.

Anwar filed his defamation suit against Khairy on March 7, 2008, alleging that the then Umno Youth deputy chief had uttered defamatory words and caused the posting on websites (including *Malaysiakini.com*) of a video clip titled "Anwar and kin no threat".