

Ahmad Zahid's injunction against Dr M dismissed

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▶ Court says plaintiff needs to prove statements are untrue

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court yesterday dismissed Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's application to prevent the re-publication and dissemination of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statements which were alleged to have defamed the former deputy prime minister.

Lawyer Shahrul Fazli Kamarulzaman, who is representing Ahmad Zahid, said Justice Datuk Rozana Ali Yusoff dismissed the application by the Umno president to obtain an interim injunction on the grounds that the issues raised by the plaintiff and defendant needed to be decided through a trial, Bernama reported.

Meanwhile, Mahathir's lawyer, Mior Nor Haidir Suhaimi, said the court dismissed the plaintiff's application after ruling that this was not the stage for the parties to argue on the

merits of the case.

"The court is of the opinion that Ahmad Zahid needs to prove that the statements made by Tun Dr Mahathir are not true. Therefore, the interim application was dismissed at a cost of RM5,000 with case management set for Aug 23."

On April 20, Ahmad Zahid, 69, filed a defamation suit against Mahathir over allegations that he used his position to influence the latter to interfere in his ongoing court proceedings.

In his statement of claim, Ahmad Zahid said on Oct 19, 2018, he was charged in the sessions court with 12 counts for breach of trust, eight for corruption and 27 for money laundering and that all of the charges will be tried in the High Court.

Ahmad Zahid claimed Mahathir had made defamatory statements with malicious intent against him at the Parti Pejuang (Pejuang) Aspirasi launch event in conjunction with the 15th Johor state election at Yayasan Kepimpinan Perdana in Putrajaya on Feb 23.

The Bagan Datuk member of Parliament claimed that the defamatory statements stated that he was a person who used

shortcuts to resolve and postpone his ongoing criminal trial and used his position to influence Mahathir to interfere in the trial and the investigations by law enforcement agencies against him.

Ahmad Zahid filed for an interim injunction so that Mahathir or his officers and representatives can retract the defamatory statements and to prevent Mahathir or his officers and representatives from publishing, distributing or disseminating the statements or any other similar defamatory statements on any social media platform.

An interim injunction order was also sought to order the defendants to delete, edit and stop the publication of a video recording or parts thereof, of the event which contained defamatory statements on YouTube and the Astro Awani Facebook page as well as on the *MalaysiaGazette* TV TikTok account.

In addition, Ahmad Zahid also applied for an interim injunction directing the defendant to write to any publisher, editor, operator and owner of online news portals or social media platforms to stop publishing the defamatory statements.