

MUHYIDDIN SHOULD KNOW BETTER'

Ex-PM's inflammatory remarks in GE15 promoted ill-will among people, says Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR

TAN Sri Muhyiddin Yassin is a veteran politician and former prime minister and should know it is not good to make statements that inflame the people and promote ill-will during the 15th General Election (GE15), said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In Anwar's reply to Muhyiddin's defence statement against his defamation suit, the Pakatan Harapan (PH) chairman said

Muhyiddin had distorted the truth and spread falsehoods about the salary the latter received as Selangor economic adviser, a matter that Anwar had publicly refuted years ago.

Anwar said Muhyiddin's statement during a GE15 campaign in Padang Serai was defamatory and malicious.

"Muhyiddin should have known that it is not good to make public statements that can inflame and promote ill-will, discontent or hostility between persons and

candidates, to mince any elector or voter before, during and after an election, more so when such statements are defamatory and malicious in nature.

"Nonetheless, the defendant had proceeded to make the same (impugned slanderous and/or libellous words) during his election campaign speeches which are clearly and indisputably a contravention of the Election Offences Act 1954," Anwar said in his reply to the Perikatan Nasion-



Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin

al chairman's statement, filed through S.N. Nair & Partners, dated Feb 16.

He said it was not difficult for Muhyiddin to access the publicly available Hansard before making the allegations.

He said Muhyiddin had no legal duty to issue false and malicious statements in the Padang Serai constituency, which is

not the seat that the latter holds in Pagoh.

In the suit, Anwar, 75, claimed that last Dec 5, Muhyiddin made

slanderous remarks against him in a speech during "Grand Finale Perikatan Nasional Padang Serai" in Taman Selasih, Kulim, in support of PN candidate Datuk Azman Nasrudin, which was attended by a large crowd.

Anwar is seeking, among others, general damages, aggravated damages, exemplary damages and an injunction to prevent Muhyiddin from continuing to publish or distribute similar defamatory statements.

On Jan 17, Muhyiddin, in his statement of defence, had said Anwar should not be offended by the criticism and questions he had raised in his speech. **Berna-**

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