

Dr M's suit against Zahid to be heard in September

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court has fixed four days starting Sept 1 to hear Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's suit against Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi over alleged defamatory statements regarding his race.

Lawyer Mior Nor Haidir Suhaimi, representing Dr Mahathir, said judge Datuk Rozana Ali Yusoff set Sept 11-14 for the trial and fixed July 14 for case management before the hearing.

"We will call two witnesses, Tun

Dr Mahathir and his son Datuk Seri Mukhriz, to testify," he said when contacted after the case management proceedings.

Three witnesses, including the defendant (Ahmad Zahid), are expected to testify at the trial.

Dr Mahathir, 97, filed the lawsuit against Ahmad Zahid, 70, on July 20 last year.

In his statement of claim, Dr Mahathir claimed that Ahmad Zahid had issued a defamatory statement against him during an

Umno divisional meeting in Kelana Jaya on July 30, 2017, and the statement was reproduced on several online news portals which can be accessed by Internet users without restriction.

Dr Mahathir said the slanderous statement meant to claim that he was not born as a Malay or a Muslim - with the alleged original name of "Mahathir son of Iskandar Kutty" - and that he claimed to be a Malay when he became prime minister to gain political and personal advan-

tage, apart from belittling Malaysians of Indian-Muslim descent.

Ahmad Zahid, in his statement of defence filed on Aug 17 last year through Messrs Shahrul Hamidi & Haziq, denied that the statement was malicious to slander and harm the reputation of the plaintiff in the public eye.

The Umno president claimed that the name "Mahathir son of Iskandar Kutty" refers to an individual based on the information in an old copy of an identity card. — Bernama