

# Dr M files RM150mil defamation suit against Anwar

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has filed a RM150mil defamation suit against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim over the latter's speech during an event in March.

The lawsuit was filed through Messrs Law Practice of Rafique at the Shah Alam High Court registry on May 3.

In the statement of claim, Anwar is alleged to have made the slanderous speech during a programme, "Kongres Nasional Khas Malaysia Madani: Perlaksa-

naan Sebuah Idealisme", at Stadium Melawati in Shah Alam on March 18.

The programme was broadcast live on Facebook via the "Anwar Ibrahim" Facebook account and PKR's YouTube channel.

Dr Mahathir claimed that Anwar had alluded to him in the speech when he referred to "a person in power for 22 years and 22 months".

The plaintiff sought for the court to take judicial notice that he had been the fourth prime minister between 1981 and 2003 (22 years) and the seventh prime minister between May 2018 and February 2020 (22 months).

He claimed that the defendant's defamatory statements had caused negative perception against him, marred his image as a statesman and a two-time prime minister, as well as his reputation as a politician and a respected leader in Malaysia and worldwide.

The plaintiff also claimed that Anwar's statements meant to say that the plaintiff was racist, a scoundrel and a religious bigot.

"It is a fact that until today, the plaintiff has never been charged or sentenced over any offence involving abuse of power or misappropriation of funds during or after his service as the prime

minister," it said.

"This fact is known by the public, including the defendant, who clearly intended to smear the plaintiff's name."

Dr Mahathir said the statements made by Anwar in his capacity as a prime minister had a far more devastating effect than any other individual in Malaysia.

"Looking at the factors, it is clear that the effect from the defendant's statements gave a huge negative impact on the plaintiff's reputation," he said.

The plaintiff is seeking RM50mil in general damages, RM100mil in exemplary damages, a court

order for the defendant to immediately retract the statements, and an apology.

He is also seeking interest on the damages, costs and other reliefs deemed fit by the court.

The case has been fixed for case management via e-Review before Shah Alam High Court judge Judicial Commissioner Jamhirah Ali on May 31.

Meanwhile, when met after having lunch with locals at the Selera Tujuh food court, Anwar said he was leaving it to lawyers to handle the defamation suit.

"Let the lawyers handle it," he said briefly in response to the news report.