

Court orders Muhyiddin to pay Lim RM400,000 by year-end

By **NURBAITI HAMDAN**
nurbaiti@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court here has ordered Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin to pay RM400,000 to DAP chairman Lim Guan Eng before the year ends.

The amount is part of RM1.35mil in damages in a defamation suit that the Bersatu president must pay in a court decision on Nov 8.

In a proceeding conducted in chambers here yesterday, Justice Roz Mawar Rozain allowed a

conditional stay of execution to Muhyiddin.

He was ordered to pay RM400,000 to Lim before or on Dec 31, and the remaining balance before or on Jan 27 next year.

This was confirmed by Lim's lawyer, Chetan Jethwani, and lawyer Guok Ngek Seong, who acted for Muhyiddin.

On Nov 8, Justice Roz Mawar made a finding that Muhyiddin had defamed Lim over the former prime minister's statement on Al-Bukhary Foundation's tax exemption.

In her decision, Justice Roz Mawar said Muhyiddin had resources at his disposal to verify and confirm whether his understanding was correct.

"Yet he did not do so and continued to make further defamatory statements against the plaintiff (Lim) after the latter had brought to his attention the falsity of such allegations in the defamatory statements," she said.

The court ordered Muhyiddin to pay RM1.05mil in general damages; RM150,000 in aggravat-

ed damages; and RM150,000 in exemplary damages.

The Pagoh MP was also ordered to pay RM50,000 in costs to Lim.

Lim had sued Muhyiddin over the latter's statement on the cancellation of Yayasan Al-Bukhary's tax exemption.

On March 27, last year, Lim filed the suit and named Muhyiddin as the sole defendant.

In his statement of claim, Lim said Muhyiddin had defamed him in Facebook posts after being released on bail by the Malaysian

Anti-Corruption Commission on March 9, 2023.

Lim, who was finance minister from 2018 to 2020 during the Pakatan Harapan administration, claimed that Muhyiddin's statement also implied that he had cancelled the approved tax exemption status given to Yayasan Al-Bukhary.

Lim, who is also Bagan MP, claimed the Perikatan Nasional chairman's statements were made in order to divert attention as he was in the media spotlight at that time.