

Najib challenges govt's gag order

Ex-PM objects to bid to stop public discourse on royal addendum claims

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Najib Razak has objected to the gag order applied by the government in its bid to stop public discourse on his claim of an additional royal addendum order, which would purportedly allow him to be placed under house arrest.

In an affidavit-in-reply filed at the High Court through Messrs Shafee & Co on Wednesday, Najib said the gag order application was “premature” as there was no immediate risk, threat or prejudice to a fair trial of any of the

parties in the proceedings.

“No one has affirmed any affidavit claiming a threat to national security with sufficient evidence to support the same,” he said in the document, sighted by *The Star*.

Najib stated that if there were any seditious or slanderous statements hurled against the royal institution, the Attorney General’s Chambers could take civil or criminal proceedings against the person.

“So far, there are no reports that any actions have been taken towards any person committing such acts; therefore, there is no immediate risk or threat to the

royal institution,” he said.

On Jan 20, the AGC filed a gag order forbidding any party from discussing Najib’s judicial review concerning his claims of the existence of a royal addendum order that purportedly allows him to carry out the remaining duration of his six-year prison term under house arrest.

The application to gag public discourse came two weeks after the Court of Appeal allowed Najib’s appeal in his judicial review application linked to the addendum order on Jan 6.

In the majority 2-1 ruling, the Court of Appeal remitted the case to the High Court for a hearing

on its merits.

Najib filed the application for leave for judicial review on April 1, 2024.

He named the Home Minister, the Commissioner General of Prisons, the Attorney General, the Federal Territories Pardons Board, the Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Law and Institutional Reform), the director-general of the legal affairs at the Prime Minister’s Department, and the Government as the first until the seventh respondents, respectively.

In the notice of application, Najib sought a mandamus order that all of the respondents or one

of them answer and verify the existence of the addendum order dated Jan 29, 2024.

Najib is seeking a mandamus order where, if the addendum order exists, all or one of the respondents must execute the royal order and immediately move him from the Kajang Prison to his residence in Kuala Lumpur, where he would serve his remaining sentence under house arrest.

On July 4, 2024, the Kuala Lumpur High Court dismissed Najib’s application for leave, citing hearsay in supporting affidavits. This prompted Najib to appeal the decision at the Court of Appeal.