

SET FOR MARCH 17

Dr M's defamation trial against Anwar postponed

SHAH ALAM: The High Court has set March 17 for case management in Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's RM150 million defamation trial against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

This was after judicial commissioner Datuk Donald Joseph Franklin granted a postponement of the five-day trial, which was scheduled to resume on Tuesday, after the former two-time prime minister was hospitalised due to a hip fracture sustained in a fall on Jan 6.

The trial had been scheduled to continue on Jan 13, 14, 28, 29 and Feb 9.

Lawyer Muhammad Rafique Rashid Ali, representing Dr Mahathir, said the 100-year-old statesman was currently receiving intensive treatment at the National Heart Institute (IJN).

"We received instructions last week from his office to seek a

postponement of the trial.

"Yesterday (Jan 13), we appeared at the High Court to update the court on Dr Mahathir's condition.

"He requires physiotherapy rehabilitation rather than surgery because of his age and his recovery is expected to be lengthy.

"The court considered our application and, with no objection from the defendant — Anwar's legal team — the postponement was granted," Rafique said.

He said both parties agreed to return to court for case management on March 17.

Dr Mahathir was admitted to IJN on Jan 6 for observation and treatment after a fall.

According to Rafique, the fall occurred as Dr Mahathir was stepping off a treadmill following his routine brisk walk before heading to the office.