

Syabas Suit Against Khalid Over Tabung Budi Programme Reaches Settlement
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 7 (Bernama) -- The defamation suit over the Tabung Budi programme brought by Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Syabas) against Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim today reached a settlement.

High Court judge Amelia Tee Hong Geok Abdullah recorded the terms of settlement by the parties in chambers.

Counsel Firdaus Husni, who represented Abdul Khalid, told reporters that the parties had reached an agreement to settle the matter.

"The plaintiff (Syabas) withdrew the action. Today, the parties achieved an agreement to settle the action (suit)," she said.

Counsel S.Ravindran, who acted for Syabas, said there was discussion between the parties over the settlement on Monday when the suit was heard before Justice Amelia.

"The suit no longer continues, the matter is resolved," he said. However, he declined to reveal the terms of settlement, saying it was confidential.

Another counsel Cheng Chang Chai said the plaintiff's four witnesses had testified during the trial, which started on Nov 24, while the defendant had yet to start its case.

Syabas filed the suit against Abdul Khalid in January this year, claiming that he had uttered defamatory words against the company at a press conference on Nov 22, last year, regarding its Tabung Budi programme.

In its statement of claim, Syabas said the defamatory words were published in an article titled "Withdraw Syabas Licence - Khalid", which was published by Bernama on the same day, and Harian Metro on Nov 23.

Syabas said that Abdul Khalid's statement could be understood to mean that Syabas had cheated the public with its Tabung Budi programme. The water concessionaire was seeking damages, cost, and other relief deemed fit by the court.

Abdul Khalid in his statement of defence, countered that Syabas had no locus standi to file the defamation suit as it performed a public function, and that he was not responsible for the said press reports which were published by third parties.

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