

Court rules Utusan guilty of defaming Guan Eng
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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 14 — The High Court today found Utusan Malaysia guilty of making “malicious”, defamatory and untruthful statements against Lim Guan Eng, and ordered the Umno daily to pay him RM200,000 in damages and RM25,000 in costs.

Justice G.V Varughese, in an hour-long judgment delivered in Penang, outlined seven paragraphs in an Utusan article titled “Kebiadapan Guan Eng” in which the paper had “maliciously defamed Lim (picture), and made him and the DAP look as if they are anti-Malay and anti-Islam.”

“The judge ruled that the defendant showed selective vendetta against DAP and the plaintiff,” Lim’s lawyer Jagdeep Singh Deo told The Malaysian Insider.

“The ruling stated that Utusan had shown disdain for the highest standards of responsible journalism,” added Jagdeep.

The lawyer said, among other things, the article had accused the Penang chief minister of “attacking Malay institutions, being racist, being opposed to Malays, demolishing Malay stalls and villages, and cancelling the state’s Maulidur Rasul celebration.”

“The learned judge, after listening to witnesses brought in by both sides, ruled that Utusan’s allegations were malicious and not factually true,” added Jagdeep.

Lim, who is also Bagan MP and Air Putih assemblyman, filed a suit against Utusan for publishing allegedly defamatory words in the article.

In his statement of claim, the Penang CM said the words used, among others, were meant to portray him as a racist who objected to anything related to Malays.

In an immediate response, Lim said that Utusan should take heed of this incident and avoid slanderous reporting in the future.

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