

**Zunar's Book Incites Hatred Towards Leaders - Witness
Bernama
January 18, 2012**

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 18 (Bernama) -- A witness in a civil suit by a political cartoonist against the police and the Malaysian government told the High Court here today that the contents of the plaintiff's book, "Cartoon-O-Phobia" could confuse the people and incite hatred against the leaders.

ASP A. Arikrishna who is also the first defendant in the legal action by Zulkiflee SM Anwar Ulhaque also known as Zunar, testified that he had scrutinized the book and found that each page contained cartoon drawings and portrayals of national leaders, the police and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) among others, that were tantamount to instigation and intended to cause racial and religious animosities.

"I also expected the book to be banned," he said during examination in-chief by Senior Federal Counsel (SFC) Norhisham Ismail.

In the suit filed on June 15, 2011, Zunar also named ASP Marina Hashim, Inspector General of Police Tan Sri Ismail Omar, Home Affairs Ministry and the Malaysian government as the second to fifth defendant respectively.

In his statement of claim, Zunar alleged that on Sept 24, 2010 at 4pm, a police team led by Arikrishna raided his office and arrested him, besides seizing 66 copies of his book, "Cartoon-o-phobia" and a cartoon painting.

He is challenging the basis for his arrest and detention and seizure of the books and painting.

Zunar claims that the arrest was wrongful under the federal Constitution and laws and was intended to frustrate the launching of his book.

He is seeking general, exemplary and aggravated damages among others, and an order that the books and painting be returned to him or that he be compensated with RM1,650 for them.

Arikrishna in his testimony said besides the books, he had also seized a cardboard with a cartoon painting of Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, the Prime Minister's wife.

"We arrested Zunar (on Sept 24, 2010) with the knowledge of his lawyer Latheefa Koya," he told the court.

Earlier in the proceeding, Zunar told the court that Arikrishna failed to inform him during the arrest, precisely which part of his book had breached the law.

"He took a while to flip through the book before pointing to certain drawings that he said could instigate. The Cartoon-o-phobia is my latest collection of political cartoons. The book is a commentary of the current political situation.

"It was to have been launched on the night of Sept 24, 2010 at the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Chinese Chamber Assembly hall, the same day I was arrested," he said during examination in-chief by his counsel N. Surendran.

Under cross-examination by SFC he said the book was based on his own perspective claiming criticism towards the government were expressed through the drawings that would act as the "people's court" but it was up to the people to decide.

Justice Vazeer Alam Mydin Meera adjourned the hearing to Feb 28.

--BERNAMA

Copyright © 2012 BERNAMA

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v6/newsindex.php?id=640983>