

Ex-PKR leaders dare Anwar to sue them
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 24 — Several former PKR leaders are challenging Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to haul them to court if their public disclosures of his moral misdeeds were untrue, Utusan Malaysia reported today.

Calling Anwar a “coward”, the leaders said in a front-page article of the Umno-owned daily that their former boss had likely refrained from suing them as he was afraid of more exposures that could further tarnish his reputation.

Among the leaders are Anwar’s former right hand man and ex-PKR Youth chief Ezam Mohd Noor, former PKR Youth deputy chief Mohd Zahid Md Arip, former PKR Youth secretary SD Johari Yasin, Anwar’s former private secretary Anuar Shaari and former Youth member Hamizun Khairuddin.

“They are baffled why Anwar only dared to sue the media like Utusan Malaysian when it was the party’s former leaders who were the first to raise questions on his morality and character in public,” the paper said.

Anwar named Utusan Malaysia last week in a whopping RM150 million defamation suit, claiming the paper had tarnished his reputation when it misreported his statement during a recent BBC interview and called him a gay rights proponent.

But Ezam said the suit was merely a “political gimmick” and not to defend the truth as the Opposition Leader is “afraid to face the truth”.

“If his intention is truly to defend the truth, why didn’t he sue Datuk Shazryl Eskay Abdullah, Datuk S. Nallakaruppan and Umi Hafilda Ali, all of whom have clearly been exposing his moral misdeeds,” he told Utusan Malaysia when contacted yesterday.

The former PKR leaders also agreed that Anwar’s suit against Utusan Malaysia was merely the Permatang Pauh’s attempt at saving his tarnished reputation from being further sullied.

“He only wants to recapture some public confidence, which has been shaken because of these moral issues,” said Anuar.

He added he was ready to be sued, adding he had not changed his mind about Anwar since he left the party.

Mohd Zahid agreed with the others, saying Anwar was afraid that more of his past undoing would be revealed if he dragged his detractors to court.

“His action (of suing Utusan Malaysia) is actually a long way off the mark if he truly wants to clear his name,” he was quoted as saying.

SD Johari pointed out that his expose on Anwar was still available for viewing on YouTube but despite this, Anwar has refused to sue him.

Hamizun said Anwar was afraid of the negative repercussions these exposes would have on public confidence in him, adding his defamation suit against Utusan Malaysia was clearly an act of a "desperate individual".

"The people have begun to doubt him and his intention to be the next prime minister because his moral records are low... that's why he sued this paper," he said.

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