

Harakah: Court Sets Aug 6 To Decide On Najib's Application
Bernama
July 23, 2015

KUALA LUMPUR, July 23 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's application to strike out two paragraphs in Harakah and Harakahdaily's defence statement pertaining to his defamation suit against them has been set for Aug 6.

High Court Judge Datuk Hue Siew Kheng set the date in chambers after hearing submissions from both parties.

Najib's lawyer Datuk Firoz Hussein Ahmad Jamaluddin told reporters that the two paragraphs as pleaded were an abuse of the court's process, unsustainable, groundless and raised to embarrass the prime minister.

"Harakahdaily Portal is not a newspaper, as such the defendants cannot avail themselves to the defence of 'qualified privilege'.

"We submitted that the defendants have failed to plead with clarity and precision to support their plea of fair comment," he said.

Meanwhile, counsel Faiz Fadhil who represented Harakah and Harakahdaily, said the qualified privilege principle was applicable to newsportals as it related to any issues of public interest.

Najib is seeking to strike out the paragraphs on fair comment and qualified privilege in the defence statement.

In the suit filed on March 18 this year, Najib cited Harakah managing director Dr Rosli Yaakob and Harakahdaily chief editor Taufek Yahya as defendants.

It concerned the publication of an article written by Rosli on Feb 19 on the 1MDB fund issue.

Najib in his statement of claim alleged that the article contained words which implied that he had misused 1MDB funds.

As such, the prime minister alleged, the publication of the article had damaged his reputation and caused him to be condemned by the social media and the mass media.

Najib also claimed that Taufek had failed to practise responsible journalism by not verifying the authenticity of the article before publishing it.

He alleged that the defendants had intentionally published the article for their own agenda, to destroy the people's confidence and trust in him.

He is seeking general, aggravated and exemplary damages, interests and an injunction to prevent the defendants or their assistants from further publishing the article.

-- BERNAMA

Copyright © 2015 BERNAMA

Source : <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1154991>