

Najib files 2nd defamation suit against Tony Pua
Free Malaysia Today
April 21, 2017
By V Anbalagan

He wants Pua to remove a video posted on Facebook on the tabling of the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965.

PETALING JAYA: Prime Minister Najib Razak has filed a second defamation suit against Tony Pua, this time over the opposition MP's posting of a video in his Facebook.

The video was over the tabling of the Syariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 (Act 355), which seeks to increase punishments for shariah offences.

The writ and the statement of claim was filed by Najib's solicitors Messrs Hafarizam Wan & Aisha Mubarak at the Kuala Lumpur High Court registry today.

Najib said on April 6, Pua, the Petaling Jaya Utara MP, made a statement at the Parliament building area which was recorded.

In the statement of claim, Najib said the 2-minute-21-second recording was uploaded on Pua's Facebook page "Tony Pua", entitled "BN abandons all Bills to give precedence to PAS RUU355 Private Member's Bill".

Najib said the live video was directed at him and it was done with malice and bad intention to defame him (Najib).

He said Pua had slandered him by virtue of the public office he held.

He is seeking general, aggravated and exemplary damages as well as an injunction to prevent Pua or his agents from publishing further statements that are defamatory.

Najib is also seeking for the defendant to publish an unconditional written apology in at least two newspapers.

He also wants Pua to remove the live video from his Facebook page immediately.

On April 11, Najib had sent a letter of demand to Pua to retract the statement, remove the video, offer a public apology and pay legal costs, but the MP stood his grounds.

The video clip in question was uploaded shortly after PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang's motion on amendments to the Syariah Court (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 was tabled.

When contacted, Pua told FMT that he was expecting a lawsuit to be filed against him.

“I am prepared to contest the suit. However, I have yet to be served with the legal papers.”

In March 2015, Najib also sued Pua and MediaRakyat portal owner Chan Chee Kong for defamation over the MP's speech delivered at a DAP fund-raising dinner in November 2014 on 1MDB.

Pua applied to strike out Najib's suit on grounds that a public officer like the PM lacked the legal capacity to sue as the issue raised was of public interest.

On Jan 16, it was Pua's turn to file a suit against Najib for abuse of his public office over the 1MDB funds.

Pua, who is also DAP national publicity chief, wants a declaration that Najib had committed the tort of misfeasance in public office and had abused his office to personally profit from the funds.

Pua, who filed the suit in his capacity as taxpayer, is also seeking an unspecified amount of damages and relief deemed fit by the court.

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