

Case management of Najib-Ling lawsuit set for July 31
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Court will first await decision of Federal Court in two appeal cases involving the locus standi of Penang Chief Minister and Bandar Kuching MP.

KUALA LUMPUR: The High Court here today set July 31 for case management of Prime Minister Najib Razak's libel suit against former MCA president Dr Ling Liong Sik over an article published in a news portal two years ago.

Judge Nor Bee Ariffin fixed the date in chambers in the presence of lawyer Nik Alia Hanafi, representing Najib, and lawyer Villie Nethi, acting for Ling.

Nik Alia said the date was set while waiting for the decision of the Federal Court on two appeal cases involving Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng and Bandar Kuching member of parliament, Chong Chieng Jen.

She said the appeals were over the issue of locus standi, that is, whether public officials could file a defamation suit in their personal capacity.

Nik Alia also said that Najib's application to strike out parts of Ling's statement of defence, relying on fair comment and qualified privilege, had not been heard yet by the court as it was still awaiting the Federal Court's decision on the two appeal cases.

Najib sued Ling on Oct 27, 2015, alleging that the former transport minister had made a libellous statement against him through an article carried by a news portal.

In his statement of claim, Najib said Ling had falsely and maliciously issued a slanderous statement against him when attending a function at a university college here, which was published in a news portal article on Oct 3, 2015.

On July 18, 2016, the court allowed Najib's application to set aside the affidavit of former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad that was filed in support of Ling's application to strike out Najib's lawsuit.

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