

Sivarasa sues Umno sec-gen over mosque speech

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By V Anbalagan

The opposition politician claims that Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor had falsely accused him of making a political speech in a Selangor mosque when he had publicly denied it.

KUALA LUMPUR: Subang MP Sivarasa Rasiah has filed a suit against Umno secretary-general Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor for allegedly making a defamatory speech on the grounds of a mosque in Cheras early this month.

The suit was filed on Tuesday by legal firm Messrs Daim & Gamany. A sealed copy of the legal papers was obtained from the High Court here to be served on Adnan, who is also Federal Territories Minister.

In his statement of claim, Sivarasa said Adnan had on June 1 falsely accused him of making political speeches in mosques.

He said it impliedly referred to the speech he had made in Masjid An-Nur in Kampung Melayu Subang in Selangor on May 24 this year.

“This false statement was clearly malicious because he (Adnan) knew I had already denied it in my earlier press statements which were widely reported,” Sivarasa said.

“His false statement implies that I had the intent of using the mosque for political purposes and did not give due respect to it.”

Sivarasa, who is also a lawyer, said Tengku Adnan had in the same speech “scandalously, shockingly and falsely” described him as a “ketagih yang pergi ketempat-tempat judi” (an addict who goes to gambling dens).

The PKR legal advisor said Tengku Adnan’s statement implied that he derived joy in giving speeches in mosques, disrespected the place of worship during Ramadan, was an irresponsible elected representative, and was involved and addicted to gambling.

He said Tengku Adnan’s speech was published in the electronic media, news portals and other social media.

“The defamatory statement has seriously injured my reputation, character and caused severe distress to me,” he said.

Sivarasa is asking for aggravated damages, other relief deemed fit by the court and an injunction to stop Tengku Adnan from repeating the statement.

In a statement, Sivarasa said he would show in court that Tengku Adnan was liable for his action through a video recording of his speech.

“It is completely ironic while falsely accusing me of making a political speech in a mosque, he himself used the platform provided by a mosque to make political attacks on me personally,” Sivarasa said.

Sivarasa said he would wait to see how Tengku Adnan was going to substantiate his accusations during trial.

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