

## **New judge to hear Najib's defamation suit against Tony Pua**

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**Justice Mohd Zaki Abdul Wahab will now preside over the case filed by Najib Razak last month against Pua over a video on the Shariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 issue.**

KUALA LUMPUR: A new judge – the third – is finally slated to hear Najib Razak's defamation suit against Tony Pua after one went on transfer and another recused himself.

Pua's lawyer Joanne Chua Tsu Fae said justice Mohd Zaki Abdul Wahab would first hear the prime minister's application to stop her client from uploading an offensive video in his Facebook account pending the outcome of Najib's suit.

"A deputy registrar has fixed June 8 to determine whether Najib's application to prevent Pua from uploading the video in his Facebook is sustainable," she told reporters after a case management today.

Mohd Zaki will later proceed to hear Najib's defamation suit against the Petaling Jaya Utara MP.

Last week, judicial commissioner Wan Ahmad Farid Wan Salleh, who was a deputy home minister before being made judge, had recused himself because he felt public perception of the independence of the judiciary should not be shaken in any way.

On April 21, judge Abu Bakar Jais had allowed Najib an ex-parte interim injunction to remove the video.

However, before he could hear both parties, the judge was transferred to the High Court in Shah Alam.

Najib's action came about over the tabling of the Shariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 (Act 355), which seeks to increase punishments for shariah offences.

Najib, in his statement of claim, said on April 6 that Pua had made a statement via video at the Parliament building area.

The 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 done with malice and bad intention to defame him.

The video clip in question was uploaded shortly after the tabling of PAS president Abdul Hadi Awang's motion on amendments to enhance the powers of the shariah courts.

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