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World is full of conspiracy theories

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THE convicted former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, according to an AFP report on Wednesday, had lashed out at Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the Malaysian judicial system after he was sentenced to six years in jail for corruption.

"I have no hope of justice," he told the court in prepared remarks after being allowed to make a statement following his conviction.

Anwar reiterated that the charges were "part of a political conspiracy to destroy me" and ensure Dr Mahathir's "continued hold on power at whatever cost even if it means sacrificing whatever little is left of the judiciary's integrity".

"I am not surprised. Are you surprised?" Anwar told reporters. He told the court that just before he was sacked on Sept 2, Dr Mahathir gave him an ultimatum: "You resign or I charge you."

"Isn't this corruption? The Prime Minister uses the judicial system as a tool to exert political pressure. All the instruments of Government including the Attorney-General's office, the police and indeed the judiciary are under the Prime Minister's thumb," he said.

Not much can be said of Anwar's trial beyond what was stated by the judge in his judgment as the appeal process is in progress.

One can only wonder if Anwar's defence will again try to resurrect the conspiracy theory.

What is apparent is that Anwar was not as uninvolved as he wants the public to believe when it comes to using the "system" when he was in power.

He was no ordinary Deputy Prime Minister. He was also Finance Minister and was the anointed successor of Dr Mahathir.

Anwar had always stood on the moral high ground. He often told others to ignore "surat layang" which he described as "budaya murahan" (debasing culture).

Yet it was the very same kind of letter that landed him in court. Judge Datuk S. Augustine Paul, among other things, noted in his judgment that the allegations (against Anwar) remained covered up from August 1997 to June 1998 when the accused caused a police report to be made on the book 50 Dalil Mengapa Anwar Tidak Boleh Jadi PM.

The investigation into the report by another branch of the police revealed the involvement of the Special Branch in procuring Exhibits P17, P18, P20 and P22 on the directions of the accused.

The judge ruled: "Therefore what was covered up by the accused was exploded by he himself when he caused the report to be made. The explosion exposed the truth."

Hopefully, one day, when the case is over, historians and commentators will write articles and books to interpret the event as well as to reveal the Anwar that they know.

The Anwar that fed on student radicalism of the 60s and 70s and the Anwar that was led by the hand into the mainstream of Malaysian politics by Dr Mahathir.

About the real Anwar and the Anwar that was the creation of the media, which he once lorded over.

It is no secret that a big section of the media and other key organs of politics, administration and business were under Anwar's thumb until his last days in the Government.

Even today, despite allegations of conspiracy, the majority of Anwar's cronies remain anchored in business and politics. They are as well off today as they were when Anwar was the crown prince.

In fact, Dr Mahathir's pro-business policies and his rejection of the IMF-type responses to the regional economic crises are keeping Anwar's cronies in business.
