

Anwar: Dr M never tried to abolish ISA
Malaysiakini.com
February 17, 2011

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim has denied claims by former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad claims that he had tried to abolish the Internal Security Act (ISA), but was blocked by the police.

Speaking to reporters after attending his sodomy trial at the Kuala Lumpur High Court, Anwar, who served for Mahathir's deputy for five years, said that the matter was never brought up.

"This matter was never brought up by Dr Mahathir at all whether in government nor in the party. I'm surprised why he is bringing it up now.

"In fact, Dr Mahathir was the person who defended (the ISA)," he said.

Unlike Mahathir, Anwar said that he had personally proposed that the ISA be reviewed when he was in government.

"Check the Hansard. I raised the matter in Parliament while I was in government in the early 1990s," he said.

'Hanif never approached me'

Anwar, who was incidentally detained under the ISA in the 1970s, said Mahathir had never made any initiative to amend or repeal the ISA when the latter was Home Minister.

At a forum on democracy organised by the Senate today, Mahathir claimed that the police had dissuaded him from scrapping the ISA.

"I suggested scrapping of the ISA, but I depend on national security advice from the police and they said 'cannot' (because) that there are still threats," he said.

Another panelist at forum, former Inspector-General of Police Hanif Omar (right), concurred with Mahathir, adding that the law was necessary at the time.

Asked on this, Anwar said he did not know whether Mahathir had met Hanif on this.

However, he stressed that he was never approached by Hanif over his opposition to the ISA.