

**Utusan defies Anwar's RM50mil lawsuit threat**  
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The Umno-owned Malay daily, Utusan Malaysia, today again highlighted the gay controversy surrounding Anwar Ibrahim, following earlier reports condemning the opposition leader for allegedly wanting to legalise homosexuality.

NONEThis is despite a legal action threat by Anwar to file a RM50 million defamation suit against the daily if it refuses to retract yesterday's front page reports which suggested he has a pro-homosexuality stance.

The controversy broke after some local dailies picked up Anwar's interview aired on BBC in which he was asked if he was willing to take gender equality as far as supporting gay rights.

Anwar had then replied: "We will have to review some of our archaic laws. We Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia generally believe and are committed to supporting the sanctity of marriage between men and women, but we should not be seen to be punitive and consider archaic laws as relevant."

In its report today, Utusan quoted Jawatankuasa Himpunan Ulama Muda Malaysia (Ilmu) chairperson Fathul Bari Mat Jahya condemning Anwar's statement as giving credence to what is haram in Islam.

"What Anwar suggested seems as if he is allowing space (for homosexuality) to be practised openly," he was quoted as saying.

He added that Anwar's statement has undermined the credibility of Pakatan Rakyat's Islamic partner PAS.

"Where's PAS' voice in this? For me, Anwar's statement brings more negative than positive. It is not appropriate to say the statement was right because it is against the values of Islam."

It also reported that Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia president Abdullah Zaik Abd Rahman had said that Anwar's statement could cause Muslims to turn away from true Islamic principles.

"Anwar's views are a deviationist thought in the name of 'human rights' used in the country's political game, this is dangerous if unaddressed," he said.

In a related report, the daily quoted several religious leaders stating that any support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transexual (LGBT) community would turn a Muslim into an apostate.

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