

## **Shafee denies animosity with Anwar**

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Senior lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah denied he has any strong animosity against Anwar Ibrahim.

In fact, the lawyer who has been appointed as lead prosecutor by Attorney General Abdul Gani Patail in the prosecution's appeal against Anwar's acquittal of Sodomy II, said he knows the opposition leader well compared to other former and current prime ministers.

"He is a close friend of mine since I was in Form Six. If you ask do I know him, at one point of time, I was closest to him compared to Dr Mahathir (Mohamad), Abdullah (Ahmad Badawi) and Najib Abdul Razak (right).

"However, I have not acted for him (Anwar) where I know something about him which could be used in this case, but I acted for others whom he had sued. In this case (Sodomy II in which Anwar is seeking to disqualify Shafee), he should be able to point to where I have a problem with him or a conflict of interest.

"I did not want to say much as I know him well," he told reporters on the sidelines at the Federal Court.

The senior lawyer explained further he knew Anwar through his lecturer at the Royal Military College, Ibrahim Saad, who was Anwar's good friend.

He said Ibrahim used to invite Anwar to the college and being also from Penang, they got close.

Shafee also questioned the complaint the opposition leader had lodged against him to the disciplinary board of the legal profession yesterday saying it should have been filed months earlier so as not to prolong the appeal.

"Why always last minute and why in installments. For what?" he asked.

Yesterday, it was reported that Anwar (left) had filed a complaint against Shafee to the disciplinary board over the lawyer in accepting a fiat to be appointed as a DPP in the appeal.

The complaint was made based on section 94 (3) of the Legal Professions Act 1976.

Anwar was seeking for the second time to disqualify Shafee on the grounds that he could not act professionally and based on former Kuala Lumpur CID chief Mat Zain Ibrahim's statutory declaration.

'I'm a professional'

Shafee said he was a professional and denied he acted solely for Umno.

He said he had represented Umno and had also represented MCA, Gerakan, and even PAS Kelantan government against Thames Water PLC. He had also acted for a company suing the Kelantan PAS government.

Shafee said he, with the late Raja Aziz Addruse, had represented Semangat 46 resulting in Umno being de-registered.

"I represented Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah (right) at that time with S46 and to say I am always close to Dr Mahathir Mohamad is not true at all.

He admitted that he does election petition cases for BN and as a result of that he is associated with the party.

However, the senior lawyer denied that he is a member of Umno or any political party.

"When Anwar was sacked (in 1998) it was like that our friendship was severed as he was no longer with the government.

"But there was no quarrel, nothing. That is why I am quite surprised that Anwar thinks that I have an agenda," he said.

On tomorrow's case, Shafee said it will centre on the DNA evidence and whether it was tampered or not.

"It concerns the chain of evidence. That resulted in the Kuala Lumpur High Court to acquit Anwar. For me, the decision should not have been made. That is the reason I feel there is a good chance of winning."

"I cannot promise 100 percent as in court cases anything can happen and we can only hope for success," he said.

## Political machinations

Anwar in response to this said this showed Shafee is an Umno lawyer and had taken his position not based on facts in law but to suit his political machinations.

"Shafee was very much involved from the very beginning. But I am not worried as I have gone through worse."

To questions that he could be disqualified from being a lawmaker after the court finds him guilty, Anwar said: "Let them try. The opposition has endured this for the past 15 years.

"They have used the courts in the past but we hope they won't in the near future," he said.

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