

**Anwar's lawyers: Sedition strike to pressure us**  
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Lawyers representing Anwar Ibrahim in the Sodomy II appeal expressed concern over the two sedition charges against co-counsel N Surendran, which they described as a move to pressure the opposition leader's defence team.

They said the government is taking action on Surendran, who is also Padang Serai MP, for merely stating the opposition leader's defence argument.

In a statement jointly signed by Gobind Singh Deo, Sangeet Deo, Sivarasa Rasiah, Eric Paulsen and Latheefa Koya,, they said both sedition charges include matters which form part of Anwar's defence which would be raised before the Federal Court on Oct 28 and 29th.

"Shockingly, the charges are on statements made by Surendran directly on our client Anwar's appeal.

"In the first case, Surendran (right) is alleged to have merely criticised the Court of Appeal's judgment convicting Anwar.

"In the second, he is alleged to have repeated Anwar's defence to the press after attending a case management session in respect of the appeal," they said.

Anwar's legal team is already hampered by the loss of DAP stalwart and lead counsel Karpal Singh, who died in a road accident last April. He is being replaced by senior lawyer Sulaiman Abdullah, who is presently on medical leave until Oct 13.

Anwar's appeal would kick off on Oct 14, with his bid to remove senior lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah from leading the prosecution team.

This is the Permatang Pauh MP's third attempt to appeal to remove Shafee from heading the prosecution.

The prosecution is also appealing the five year's jail sentence imposed on Anwar following the Court of Appeal overturning the Kuala Lumpur High Court's decision.

Remove Surendran's charges

Meanwhile, all five lawyers, who inked today's statement, said it is unprecedented for a legal counsel to be charged with sedition merely for repeating his client's legal defence.

"These charges are a form of pressure upon the entire legal defence team of Anwar.

"Under our justice system, every person has a right to a fair trial. Interference or intimidation of legal counsel would amount to a serious denial of Anwar's right to a fair trial," they said.

As lawyers, the five said they must be allowed to prepare for and argue the appeal without any undue pressure.

"We therefore call for the immediate withdrawal of the sedition charges against Surendran.

"Anything short of this may have very serious repercussions on the propriety of Anwar's appeal and may even render the entire proceedings tainted from the very beginning itself," they warned.

Anwar, had on Sept 25 also questioned the sedition charge imposed on Surendran who was merely stating his defence.

Surendran had also filed applications to strike out the two charges.