

Anwar commends Federal Court proceedings

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Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim has today commended on the five judges hearing his Sodomy II conviction appeal in the Federal Court, which has entered into its fifth day today.

Anwar said the judges have been attentive in hearing the submissions put up by the defence counsel.

"I must confess the bench has shown a lot of patience in listening attentively, unlike my past experiences with judges, including those at the Court of Appeal who say they understand DNA, but shown they have not," he said.

Anwar said this to reporters at the end of today's proceedings.

On March 7, the Court of Appeal overturned the acquittal of Anwar by the High Court in Kuala Lumpur, found the opposition leader guilty of sodomising his former aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan and sentenced him to five years' jail.

The prosecution's appeal at the appellate court took place for two days when it was at the height of the Kajang move, where the opposition leader was slated to contest later that month in March.

Anwar, 67, who is also Permatang Pauh MP, also commented on what was raised by government-appointed prosecutor Muhammad Shafee Abdullah, whom he described as being nasty.

"The DNA insinuation against me is nasty and the (lead prosecutor) counsel, wants to become the next attorney-general or minister, which is a fact. What is submitted is plain science and based on scientific evidence. I am convinced my counsel would debunk their scientific evidence," he said.

The opposition leader continued to defend his decision to appoint former Federal Court judge Gopal Sri Ram to lead his defence.

He said as the prosecution can appoint an Umno-linked lawyer (Shafee), then he is entitled to choose any lawyers who best represent him.

"I have lost Karpal (Singh, in a road accident) and Sulaiman Abdullah who is medically indisposed. I have to choose the best, and articulate the best," Anwar said.

He added that he had in the past his lawyers had been harassed and intimidated (by the authorities), and that he can choose a lawyer with whom he is confident.

There have been criticisms following Sri Ram appearing for Anwar, as the Bar Council had passed a resolution earlier this year that former senior judges should not be allowed to appear in courts.

Shafee: Dr Osman not credible

Meanwhile, Shafee told reporters outside court that the testimony by Pusrawi doctor Dr Mohd Osman Abdul Hamid as a defence witness cannot be accepted by the court.

“I’m not merely saying he (Osman) is not credible but I said we have proven that he did not tell the truth. We have proven it on his own evidence,” he said,

Dr Osman (left), was the first doctor who examined Saiful after the alleged sodomy incident. Saiful came to Pusrawi Hospital two days after the alleged sodomy incident on June 26, 2008.

The senior lawyer further related to the media what transpired in court and added that while the defence submitted last week that evidence gained through trickery and deception should not be admitted, the prosecutor countered otherwise.

“There is a Singapore case law which shows such evidence can be accepted. The defence are saying the arrest is unlawful which I said it is not. But even if the arrest is unlawful, the evidence gained from Anwar’s cell can be accepted as evidence.”

“This is the accepted law in Singapore, Malaysia and I understand the Commonwealth,” he said.

The appeal will continue tomorrow, with Shafee expected to finish his submissions, while the defence lawyers will also reply tomorrow.