

**US, Australia tick off M'sia over sodomy verdict**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
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The Federal Court's decision to convict and sentence Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim to five years in prison for sodomy today has been condemned by individuals and NGOs both local and international.

The court had upheld the Court of Appeal's verdict and reaffirmed Anwar's conviction under Section 377B of the Penal Code for allegedly sodomising his former aide, Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan.

This is the second time Anwar is found guilty under the country's sodomy law.

**Australian Foreign Ministry**

We are deeply concerned by the severity of the sentence and we have made our concerns known to the Malaysian Government.

Australia has welcomed Prime Minister Najib's recent messages about moderation and tolerance.

As a friend of Malaysia, Australia encourages the Malaysian Government to consider the impact of recent decisions, including the Anwar verdict and the retention of the Sedition Act, on its international standing and its commitment to human rights.

**US Embassy, Kuala Lumpur**

The United States is deeply disappointed and concerned by the rejection of Anwar Ibrahim's final appeal and his conviction.

The United States has followed the trial of Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim closely.

The decision to prosecute Anwar, and his trial, have raised serious concerns regarding the rule of law and the independence of the courts.

The United States and Malaysia have a strong partnership, and in the context of this relationship, we have regularly raised our serious concerns regarding the Anwar case with Malaysian officials and emphasized that fairness, transparency, and the rule of law are essential to promote confidence in Malaysia's judicial system and democracy.

**Richard Bennet, Amnesty International Asia Pacific director**

This is a deplorable judgment, and just the latest chapter in the Malaysian authorities' relentless attempts to silence government critics.

The 'sodomy' charges against Anwar Ibrahim have always been politically motivated, and he should be released immediately

The Malaysian judiciary missed an opportunity to demonstrate its independence from political interference.

We consider Anwar Ibrahim to be a prisoner of conscience – jailed solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.”

The attempts to silence the opposition leader come amidst a wider crackdown on dissenting voices in Malaysia.

The authorities have over the past year made increasing use of the draconian Sedition Act to target journalists, politicians and academics they find inconvenient. This practice must end immediately.

**Justice Elizabeth Evatt, International Commission of Jurist (ICJ) commissioner**

It is clear from the decision of the Federal Court today that the government of Malaysia has once again inappropriately used Section 377B of the Penal Code against its political opponents.

This is deplorable, especially since Section 377B criminalizes consensual same-sex relations and thereby violates a range of international law and standards, including on the rights to privacy, non-discrimination and equal protection.

**Phil Robertson, Human Rights Watch (HRW) deputy Asia director**

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's government has persisted in its politically-motivated prosecution of opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim at the expense of democratic freedoms and the rights to non-discrimination and privacy for all Malaysians.

By persisting in its political vendetta using Section 377, the government is also denigrating Malaysia's LGBT community.

Using an archaic and discriminatory law in order to score political points shows Prime Minister Najib's encouragement of intolerance under his rule.

**Rupert Colville, Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

We are disappointed by the Federal Court ruling today...There are allegations that this case has been politically motivated and the trial marred by violations of due process rights in relation to the opportunities provided to the defence, raising concerns about the fairness of the judicial process.

In addition, (Anwar) has been investigated and his lawyers prosecuted under the 1948 Sedition Act for speaking about the case.

We are highly concerned by the increasing use of the Sedition Act in an apparently arbitrary and selective fashion, against political opposition, human rights activists, journalists, lawyers and university professors in Malaysia since 2014.

**Karim Lahidji, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) president**

The Federal Court's verdict is the disgraceful conclusion of a relentless judicial campaign against Anwar Ibrahim.

Malaysia's judiciary failed to demonstrate its independence from the executive branch in a trial that had clear political motivations.

**K Arumugam, Suara Rakyat Malaysia (Suaram) acting executive director**

Anwar Ibrahim was convicted despite the prosecution's failure to prove his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The verdict will further tarnish the credibility of Malaysia's justice system and the country's international image," he pointed out.

**S Arutchelvam, Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) secretary-general**

The decision today besides creating a political crisis as well as leadership crisis in Pakatan; will also derail real issues faced by the normal rakyat such as the serious increase in prices of goods, the floods, the dengue epidemic, the implementation of the good and services tax and other real issues.

**Bersih steering committee**

We understand that the majority of the people as reflected in the result of the 13th general election will be upset by today's travesty of justice, but we call upon them to respond rationally by focusing on strengthening our public institutions, which is one of Bersih's eight demands.

Among the core public institutions that need reforming is the judiciary...

This is a political persecution reflective of an extremely flawed democracy...Today's turn of events makes BERSIH's cause for free and fair elections even more urgent.