

PKR activists go hungry outside prison for Anwar

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By Nigel Aw

Under sweltering heat, five PKR activists gazed over barbed wires where their leader Anwar Ibrahim is languishing.

The grassroots party activists are holding a hunger strike for the jailed opposition leader and have unfurled a banner of Mahatma Gandhi opposite the Sungai Buloh prison.

The activists, who began their hunger strike at 8 this morning, have taken up a spot at the bus stop across the road from the prison.

“We are worried about Anwar’s health, he needs better medical attention and we hope he can at least be treated at the Sungai Buloh Hospital,” said K Gunasekaran, who is among the five.

Anwar has been transferred to the hospital wing of Sungai Buloh prison due to a prolonged back condition.

Gunasekaran hopes the 48-hour hunger strike will at least raise some attention for the opposition leader’s needs.

Anwar, who was jailed on Feb 10 for sodomy, had attracted daily vigils outside the prison but they have since stopped.

He is serving a five-year jail sentence, but has insisted the sodomy charge is politically motivated.

Gunasekaran said the hunger strike was also to lobby the government to allow Anwar to attend the current Parliament sitting in his capacity as opposition leader.

“We also hope that the Yang di-Pertuan Agong can expedite Anwar’s application for a pardon.

“It has been a while now and we still do not know what the outcome will be,” he said.

Some 20 other PKR supporters have also converged outside the prison to show support for the hunger strikers.

The other four are R Chandran, N Sivashankari, R Krishnan and K Jeganathan.

Much attention has been diverted away from Anwar after his jailing as Pakatan Rakyat fell into disarray.

The opposition coalition partners are engaged in a bitter quarrel as PAS unilaterally pushed for hudud in Kelantan.

This is amid a crackdown by authorities against opposition politicians and activists over the March 7 Kita Lawan rally protesting Anwar's jailing.

Eleven people have since been arrested over the protest.

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