

From 2018 to 2022, Anwar gave no indication of 'flawed prosecution'

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Summary

- An aide to Anwar Ibrahim tried to dismiss criticism about the prime minister not voicing concerns over prosecution against politicians after GE14.
- Kamil Munim cited how Anwar warned against vengeance against Najib Abdul Razak.
- Checks by Malaysiakini showed Anwar was actually supportive of Najib's prosecution and stressed that the previous Pakatan Harapan federal government "upheld the rule of law".
- There are no reports of Anwar commenting on cases against Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and others during that period.

An aide to Anwar Ibrahim tried to deflect criticism that the prime minister did not voice any concerns about prosecutions against politicians after the 2018

general election.

This comes after the prime minister said yesterday that some cases from that time were rushed, flawed, and politically vindictive.

In a social media post last night, the premier's political secretary Kamil Munim cited how Anwar had in his first week of Pakatan Harapan winning the election, warned against vengeful action against Najib Abdul Razak and that the prosecution against the latter must follow due process.

However, checks by Malaysiakini from May 2018 to November 2022, found that beyond that warning, Anwar had not voiced any concerns about charges levelled against politicians then.

There are no records of the PKR president commenting on the corruption cases against Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Rosmah Mansor, and other politicians besides Najib.

Further, Anwar appeared to have been supportive of the prosecution against Najib - even hailing it as an example of the people's power.

On May 20, 2018 - two days after his initial statement warning against vengeance towards Najib - the PKR leader assured that a probe on the former prime

minister would be fair.

On April 1, 2019, Anwar voiced support for calls for a live telecast of Najib's trial, saying the people deserve to know the extent of money that had been "robbed".

On April 5, 2019, he joked at a campaign event that Najib might be occupying his former jail cell at the Sungai Buloh prison.

On April 29, 2019, he said that prosecuting Najib won't be easy as Harapan "upheld the rule of law".

Later in January 2020, after the MACC revealed incriminating audio recordings of Najib's phone calls, Anwar raised concerns about due process being followed.

However, he argued that whether the information revealed could help uphold justice also needed to be taken into consideration.

'Major victory for M'sians'

When Najib was convicted by the High Court over the SRC International case on July 28, 2020, Anwar - in a joint statement - hailed it as a "major victory for Malaysians".

“This process of justice would not have started if the people did not rise to give victory to Harapan and defeated BN in the 14th general election,” he said together with Amanah president Mohamad Sabu and then DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng.

Anwar repeated this stance when Najib’s conviction was upheld by the Federal Court and the former premier was sent to jail on Aug 23, 2022.

He added then that the people’s victory had allowed for a “professional prosecution” and for the judiciary to be brave in making an independent decision based on facts.

Anwar also appeared dismissive at the time of calls for Najib to receive a royal pardon.

The PKR president did, however, criticise an MACC probe into the SRC case’s trial judge Mohd Nazlan Mohd Ghazali as interfering with the judiciary.

After becoming PM

Anwar’s views on cases against politicians post-GE14, however, did appear to change after he became prime minister.

In a talk with the Milken Institute in Singapore in September 2023, the prime minister said the charges against Zahid - who is his deputy prime minister - were questionable and not professionally carried out while implying it was politically motivated.

This was as the charges came days after Dr Mahathir Mohamad reportedly threatened Zahid to either dissolve Umno or face prosecution, Anwar claimed.

Anwar, however, has maintained that the decision to withdraw all 47 charges against Zahid was the sole discretion of then attorney-general Idrus Harun.

Then yesterday, the prime minister remarked that some cases after GE14 were flawed.

“You must also know, that time, the pace of prosecution taking place all done in a hurry, with venom, enmity, and political vengeance, with those in power at that time, so many of the prosecutions were flawed,” he said.

He said this while commenting on criticism against him regarding Rosmah Mansor’s acquittal of 12 money laundering charges and five counts of failing to declare income to the Inland Revenue Board.

The judge had allowed Rosmah’s bid to quash the case on the grounds that the

charges were defective and failed to disclose the essential elements of the alleged offences.

Anwar said he had his own views regarding Rosmah's case, which he did not disclose.

He also stressed that the prosecution is appealing against her acquittal.

Rosmah - who is Najib's wife - had previously been convicted in a separate corruption case involving a solar energy project. She is appealing against the conviction.

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