

Supporters: Politics behind sodomy claim
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Politicians, including from Umno, and public interests groups rallied behind Anwar Ibrahim today as fresh sodomy allegations emerged against the Pakatan Rakyat prime minister-designate, sending shock waves across the country's political landscape.
MCPX

Expressing doubts over the authenticity of the allegation made by an Anwar aide, they are convinced that the allegation was politically engineered to put the brakes on Anwar's charge to Putrajaya to form the next federal government.

DAP national vice-chairperson Zulkifli Mohd Noor believed the allegation was a 'political invention' by unknown hands at the helm of the Barisan Nasional government.

anwar ibrahim pc 120508 01 "I will not be surprised if more such allegations will surface to stop Anwar from becoming the prime minister," he said over the telephone.

Former Anwar's close aide and ex-deputy finance minister Affifuddin Omar described the allegation as 'ridiculous', hinting it could just be an extension of former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad political era.

The senior Umno politician from Kedah was among those who vehemently defended Anwar's innocence and protested against Mahathir's decision to sack the then Umno deputy president from the party during the fiery emergency supreme council meeting on the night of Sept 2, 1998.

"Government changes but lies remain the same. Like in 1998, this allegation too will be proven unfounded," he told Malaysiakini.

Anwar again faced another round of political crisis after an aide lodged a police report yesterday claiming that the former deputy premier had sodomised him several times, the last being on Thursday in a luxury apartment in Kuala Lumpur.

Still under police investigation, the 23-year-old man, who had joined Anwar only a few months ago, is being treated at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital.

Diverting public attention

DAP national labour bureau head and Perak executive councillor A Sivanesan was skeptical about the timing of the allegation when BN popularity was at its lowest ebb.

The federal ruling coalition's public rating has hit a new low following worsening inflation climate and controversial political issues such as the unresolved murder of Mongolian woman Altantuya Shaariibuu.

Sivanesan questioned the motive to raise the allegation only now when in his report the victim claimed that "it was not the first time Anwar had sexually assaulted me".

Being a matured man, he said obviously the victim could have brought up the allegation earlier, even during the last general election.

"If at all the victim had allowed a person to sodomise him for more than once, he was a consenting party.

"Why he must raise the issue now?" asked Sivanesan, pouring doubts on the allegation.

Sivanesan who is Sungkai state assemblyperson believed the allegation was designed to divert public attention on Umno's internal problems and escalating cost burden on the people.

Insult to intelligence

Kedah PKR executive councillor V Arumugam claimed the accusation was meant to block Anwar's path to Putrajaya, adding that "the victim was undoubtedly a planted BN agent to invent it".

"Surely this false allegation was to create a political hindrance to Anwar's surge to the premiership," he said, expressing confidence that Pakatan Rakyat would overcome the latest political development with overwhelming public support.

Pokok Sena Umno division secretary Ramli Mohd Yunus concurred, describing the allegation as "mind bogging and an insult to intelligence".

He doubted 'Anwar is so stupid' to get embroiled in a sex scandal when he was so close to power, adding that it would be the last thing the PKR de facto leader would want at this critical political juncture.

Penang-based Makkal Sakti Welfare Association president G Asoghan was convinced it was a political tactic to thwart Anwar from seizing control of the federal government.

"I never thought our political leadership would stoop so low to resort such cheap political maneuvering.

"It could backfire on the government," he warned.

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