

Anwar leaves Turkish embassy
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Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim walked out of the Turkish embassy in Kuala Lumpur at 6.45pm today where he took refuge after being hit with sodomy accusations.
MCPX

anwar saiful bukhari sodomy allegations turkish embassy release 300608 04He told journalists outside the embassy that he had decided to leave after getting assurances for his safety from three ministers - Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar, Foreign Minister Rais Yatim and Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak.

"I've decided to leave after getting assurances from the statements of the foreign minister, the home minister and the deputy prime minister," said a rather fresh-looking Anwar, standing on the step of an MPV car.

"I pray enough will be done for my security," he told reporters after emerging from the ambassador's residence after spending 36 hours inside.

"Although, I'm not completely convinced of the leadership of the police, whom I believe have fabricated evidence during my previous trials, I've decided to leave because of the assurances (from the ministers).

"I'm quite sure that most of the police will do their jobs professionally, but I'm not so sure about their leadership."

anwar saiful bukhari sodomy allegations turkish embassy release 300608 06When asked whether he will cooperate in the police investigation into his aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan's allegations against him, Anwar's retort was, "What investigations?".

"I will assist in any inquiries but investigations which are bad in nature like in the past, where there were bad judges, prosecutors, police and witnesses..."

According to Anwar, the new charges would be "a repeat of the 1998 fiasco" when he was hit with the sodomy and corruption counts that were widely seen as politically motivated.

He spent six years in jail until 2004 when the sex charge was overturned. Anwar said he was targeted again because he had evidence that the police chief and attorney-general had fabricated evidence in the original trial.

The government has denied any connection with the accusations by Anwar's aide, who said he was sodomised at an upmarket condo in Damansara.

Four MPs, including two from Umno, to defect

Anwar added that the sodomy allegations were meant to derail the announcement of a by-election in which he would be contesting to pave the way for his return to Parliament.

anwar saiful bukhari sodomy allegations turkish embassy release 300608 10Anwar claimed

that four parliamentarians from the ruling Barisan Nasional component parties - of whom two were from Umno - will be defecting to the opposition Pakatan Rakyat this week.

"This week, I was supposed to announce which constituency I was going to contest in and the four Barisan Nasional parliamentarians who are going to join us. As such, they've had to act now (referring to the Saiful allegations)."

anwar saiful bukhari sodomy allegations turkish embassy release 300608 05According to Anwar, because of the allegations, he has had to put off the announcements.

When asked if he was told to leave by Turkish ambassador Barlas Ozener, he stressed that he was walking out on his own accord.

"No, the ambassador did not ask me to leave. I'm doing so because of the guarantees of my personal safety."

A friend of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Anwar had sought sanctuary at the embassy yesterday, saying he had received threats and feared for his life.

Foreign Minister Rais Yatim summoned the Turkish ambassador today and warned he would "suffer the consequences of obstructing justice" if he allowed Anwar to evade a police investigation.

anwar saiful bukhari sodomy allegations turkish embassy release 300608 11Turkey's foreign ministry said Anwar had come to the embassy to seek sanctuary due to concern over his "personal safety" and had left "of his own free will".

"We conveyed to the Malaysian side that Anwar's request was granted on purely humanitarian grounds and that the issue has no political aspect as far as we are concerned," it said in a statement.

Anwar left in a car after the six-minute press conference outside the Turkish ambassador's residence, which is about 15-minute walk from the embassy.

anwar saiful bukhari sodomy allegations turkish embassy release 300608 07He was accompanied by his wife PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, vice-president Azmin Ali and lawyer Sankara Nair.

Earlier today, he said he would not leave the embassy until the government guaranteed his safety.

"I need categorical assurance on my safety," said Anwar.

The PKR de facto leader had holed up at the Turkish embassy from 6am yesterday.

Syed Hamid: He's staging a drama

Meanwhile, Home Minister Syed Hamid Albar accused Anwar of staging a drama and said that he was perfectly safe.

"No one has endangered his life, a private person has made a police report against him. You should allow the police to investigate," he told reporters.

"It is play-acting on the part of Anwar to gain sympathy, to show that his life is in danger. I give guarantees that his life will be protected, his life is not under threat at all."

Leading human rights group Suaram said the allegations were a sign of desperation by the ruling coalition as it faced being ousted by Anwar's resurgent opposition.

"We see this as a politically motivated move by the ruling party. They are at the brink of losing power and support of the people," said Suaram's executive director Yap Swee Seng.

"I think there will be a wave of street protests in support of Anwar against these wild allegations," he said. "People are fed up with corruption and abuse of power by this regime."

Anwar's PC at party HQ cancelled

Meanwhile, a much-anticipated press conference by Anwar at the PKR headquarters in Tropicana, Petaling Jaya did not take place tonight, much to the disappointment to the posse of journalists and supporters.

He was expected to speak to his supporters and to take questions from the media at 9pm tonight.

Some 200 of his supporters had gathered at the party building since 8pm, waiting to hear from their leader.

Party leaders said that Anwar was not able to come due to security reasons.

It is also learnt that he was holed up in an unknown location, in a meeting with his lawyers and this will be followed by another meeting with party leaders.

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