

**It is only Saiful's word against Anwar's**  
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There is a gulf between truth and credibility. Nowadays, truth no longer matters. In an era where we are bombarded by advertising 24 hours a day in all types of mediums, truth takes a backseat.

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We are told that a particular product is the best in the market. Authoritative figures are quoted to add to the credibility of that claim. Yet, we know it not be to true because competitor products also make the same claims. So, we buy based upon perception.

The same is happening in Malaysian politics. Perception, which leads to votes, is shaped by the credibility of a certain party or personality. Facts have given way to statements, statements that sound authoritative but that not necessarily convey anything factual.

Let us take the statements surrounding the case of the latest police investigation on Anwar Ibrahim. Almost immediately, his nemesis, a man who speaks from both sides of his mouth, explained that the accusations must be true.

The government cannot be so silly as to bring up the same charge twice. Like a smoker, it is not easy for a sodomite to change his lifestyle. Now that is rational and logical. So, it must be true.

Those statements, made by an authoritative figure, add to the on-going contest of credibility between Anwar Ibrahim and his detractors. Since such an authoritative figure pronounced it to be true, one finds it echoed everywhere including in parliament. Since it was repeated in parliament by a parliamentarian, it must be true.

None of these statements are supported by evidence. What should have been said was that the police in 1988 found irrefutable evidence that proved beyond a reasonable doubt that Anwar Ibrahim is a sodomite.

The evidence, presented in open court, was so convincing that Malaysians found new confidence in their judiciary. The federal court in 2004 upheld Anwar's appeal on technicalities and that the present case is also based upon similar irrefutable evidence.

Malaysians will believe even more in the government, police, judiciary and the media after the completion of this latest case.

But we all know that the irrefutable evidence this time round is one man's word against another. The police cannot possibly have irrefutable evidence because the investigation is still on-going.

There is also the problem of not allowing the accused access to the details of the accusation. This makes it impossible for Anwar Ibrahim to defend himself.

Whilst some of us do not need facts to hang a fellow Malaysian, the Malaysian government cannot forget some of the basic rules of natural justice lest the electorate hangs it come 2013. If Anwar Ibrahim is to be investigated, he should be told for what reason.

If it is sodomy, he should be given the statement of his accused, especially after being an overnight guest of the Royal Malaysian Police. Justice must be seen to be done.

To be fair to the government, it is still early days yet. But Abdullah must be fair to the Malaysian people. If Anwar Ibrahim can be hauled up by the police based upon the accusation of one man, then it is only correct that others in his government facing the same dilemma be asked to go on leave to allow the police a free hand in their investigations.

As some have noted, without a video tape showing Anwar in the act, it would be impossible to convince the Malaysian people that there is no political motive behind the charges.

Since such a video tape, to my knowledge, does not exist, the government may need to show an even hand by removing all its members who exist under a similar cloud of suspicion.

If Abdullah can achieve that, the credibility of the BN government may be restored. As for the statements by his predecessor, only time will tell how much of it is based upon facts and how much is mere speculation.

For now, many of his statements have been rendered inoperative – they have no credibility.

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