

Enough in doc's SD to drop case
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Syed Jaymal Zahiid

The statutory declaration by the doctor who initially examined Saiful Azlan Bukhari should suffice for the prosecution to drop the sodomy charge, said PKR leader Anwar Ibrahim today.
MCPX

anwar ibrahim pc 080808 02"Contents of the statutory declaration clearly shows that the doctor was forced to fabricate evidence just as what had happened to me in 1998 when I was accused with the same allegation I face right now," Anwar told a press conference at the party's headquarters today.

Anwar also claimed that importance of the statutory declaration has been deliberately ignored and just as in the past, the PKR de facto leader is reinforcing his claims that the blacking out of the declaration gesticulates a systematic attempt to quell his political comeback.

"I am concerned about this. The fact that the mainstream media and the authorities have deliberately blacked out the news of the statutory declaration cannot guarantee that the trial will be dealt with transparency and fairness," said Anwar.

Anwar yesterday was charged with having committed sodomy on Saiful under Section 377B of the Penal Code on June 26 between 3.01pm and 4.30pm at Unit 11-5-1 Desa Damansara Condo in Bukit Damansara, Kuala Lumpur.

He was subsequently released on RM20,000 personal bond without surety.

'This conspiracy is falling apart'

The PKR leader however said despite all this, he is confident that the statutory declaration made by Osman will help clear his name.

the charge against anwar ibrahim sodomy allegation trial 070808"The conspiracy launched against me in the final week of June 2008 is falling apart. There is a hasty attempt by some to patch up glaring holes in the complainant's testimony. This will certainly fail given the preponderance of evidence confirming my innocence," he said.

Yesterday, the media revealed that Dr Mohamed Osman Abdul Hamid, who examined Saiful four hours before he lodged a police report, had stuck by his findings in a statutory declaration made on Aug 1. [See statutory declaration in full]

While Pusrawi Hospital - his employer - denied Osman had carried out a sodomy-related examination, the doctor stated that he did conduct such a check-up and that he found no evidence of sodomy.

The Burmese national also claimed that he was 'intimidated' by the police numerous times and has since gone into hiding together with his family for fear of their safety given the intense interest the case has generated.

Meanwhile, Anwar also said that he was worried about the safety of the doctor as there was a probability that the latter might be "kidnapped and forced to retract his declaration".

anwar ibrahim pc 080808 04"Who knows? He might then be forced to say that he actually did a frontal check-up instead of a rear check-up, or he actually did a check-up on the ear instead of the anus and got confused along the way," quipped Anwar.

He also likened Osman's claims of intimidation and his act of fleeing the country to that of private investigator P Balasubramaniam who made an explosive statutory declaration linking Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak to the murder of a Mongolian national.

Balasubramaniam however retracted his statutory declaration and issued a new one but had removed all statements that had mention Najib and have since fled the country with his family and have been in hiding ever since.

"The doctor's personal safety is a matter of deep concern to us. Material witnesses in high-profile cases in Malaysia have gone missing in the past such as Balasubramaniam.

"I (however) applaud those brave individuals who have demonstrated their commitment to freedom and justice by coming forward with important evidence, and call upon the authorities to ensure their protection," commented Anwar.

Bar council forum should be held in closed doors

In a separate matter, Anwar also commented on the PAS protest against an open forum on conversion to Islam organised by the Bar Council.

"I have always adopted the liberal and open approach but I personally think that the forum is inappropriate if it is done openly,"

He said that the protesters were not angered by the "substance of the forum but are perceiving it as an attempt to denigrate Islam".

"It is a very sensitive issue and the forum should be held in closed doors and addressed to quarters who are prepared," said Anwar who then added that it was "better for the long run if such events are held in closed doors."

The forum entitled "Conversion to Islam: Article 121 (1A) of the Federal Constitution, Subashini and Sharmala Revisited" is scheduled to take place tomorrow morning.

Anwar was accompanied by his wife and PKR president Wan Azizah Wan Ismail at the press conference that lasted half an hour.