

## **Anwar withdraws recusal bid in Sodomy II trial**

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**Hafiz Yatim & Hazlan Zakaria**

Anwar Ibrahim is not proceeding with his appeal against the recusal of the High Court judge in his Sodomy II trial, to withdraw himself from hearing the case.

The opposition leader withdrew his application this morning, said Anwar during a press conference at the Opposition Leader's office in Parliament today.

"Changing one judge would not change the state of the Malaysian judiciary," he said.

The appeal was scheduled to be heard at the Court of Appeal this Friday.

Anwar's (right) counsel had earlier complained over the Appellate Court registrar's 'efficiency' in giving such an early date. They claimed it was an unprecedented move to fix the hearing despite the petition had yet to be filed.

The Permatang Pauh MP has a growing list of complaints against the judiciary throughout his sodomy trial over bias displayed by the judiciary and prosecution.

These include his appeal in not getting evidence and documentation before the start of his trial, and not being given the witness list.

Move to expedite trial

On Feb 18, High Court judge Justice Mohamad Zabidin Mohd Diah had refused to remove himself from the bench following an application by lead counsel Karpal Singh, that the judge had acted with bias in not cautioning local daily Utusan Malaysia over their reports in the trial.

Mohamad Zabidin refused to withdraw from hearing the case and refuted any allegation of wrongdoing.

The judge then postponed the hearing and fixed March 25 for mention when Anwar indicated that he would appeal the non-recusal decision.

Anwar filed an appeal against Mohamad Zabidin's decision the next day.

At the press conference this morning, Karpal said his client had ordered for the application to be withdrawn because he does not want to sodomy trial to be prolonged any further.

"We are trying to expedite the trial. Any charge that we are delaying the trial is unfounded," he said.

The hearing for Anwar's sodomy will resume on Mar 25, where accuser Mohd Saiful Bukhari will be cross-examined by the defence.

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