

**Anwar's Acquittal Not Yet A Triumph For The Justice System**  
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I had in my first response to Anwar Ibrahim's acquittal from Sodomy II charges yesterday said that it was a victory for justice.

There was immediate response from detractors accusing me of double standards, alleging that I would regard the justice system as fair and just when Anwar is freed but the opposite if Anwar is imprisoned.

These detractors have got me wrong. Anwar's acquittal was a victory for justice but not yet a triumph for the justice system.

Just as a swallow does not make a summer, the justice system in Malaysia has a very long way to go despite the Anwar Sodomy II acquittal to restore national and international confidence in its efficiency, independence and integrity.

In acquitting Anwar, Judge Mohd Zabidin Mohd Diah cited the possibility that the DNA samples were compromised and the lack of corroborative evidence. On these grounds alone, Anwar should never had been charged in this first place. Furthermore, Anwar's defence should not have been called at the end of the prosecution case.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin today joined the Prime Minister, Najib Razak and the Information, Communications and Culture Minister Dr. Rais Yatim to proclaim that Anwar's acquittal was proof of the independence of the judiciary in Malaysia and would increase the confidence of Malaysians and international community in Najib's transformation promises.

Such claims and proclamations are most fragile.

Firstly, it will not be easily forgotten that the crisis of confidence in the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law reached a new climax under Najib's premiership, when he orchestrated the unconstitutional coup d'etat and power grab in Perak state which was given legitimacy by compromised and subservient judiciary.

Secondly, such claims would be instantly destroyed if Anwar is subject to new and further persecutions, whether in a decision to appeal against Anwar's acquittal or to harass him with new charges.

I call on Najib to end all gutter politics and character assassination of political opponents and the politics of lies and hate, which of late has poisoned Malaysian politics and the nation-building process – as for instance the incessant lies trying to portray the DAP as anti-Malay, anti-Islam and anti-Malay Rulers.

Let the battle for the hearts and minds of the voters be on policies and programmes and not on character-assassination, lies and falsehoods.

Anwar's acquittal yesterday has given hope that the decay of key national institutions have not reached the point of no return and that it is possible to effect changes and reforms from within the present system – although there can be no better surety of fundamental reforms of key national institutions than to bring about a change of federal power in Putrajaya in the next general elections.

Anwar's acquittal is likely to affect Najib's time-table for the holding of the next general elections as the possibility of dissolution of Parliament immediately after the Chinese New Year has receded into the background.

This is probably why Parliament has announced the dates for the new Parliamentary calendar this year –

with official opening of Parliament by the Yang di Pertuan Agong on March 12 starting a 20-day meeting for Dewan Rakyat from March 12 to April 12, 2012; a second parliamentary meeting of 12 days from 11th June to 28th June and a 34-day 2013 Budget meeting from Sept. 24 to Nov. 27, 2012.

As of now, I expect the March meeting of Parliament to be held but not the June meeting, as otherwise the "feel good" feeling generated from Najib's 2012 Budget "goodies" would have been completely dissipated.

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(The views expressed above belongs to the author in its entirety and does not represent the opinion of Malaysian Mirror in any way)

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