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# Justice served, say opposition leaders

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**KUALA LUMPUR;** The usually silent hallways of the High Court here yesterday were rocked by loud cheers as word spread that Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had been acquitted in his two-year trial for sodomy.



Pakatan Rakyat leaders, were swarmed by reporters outside the courtroom on the fifth floor, as one expressed relief and thankfulness at the verdict. PKR deputy president Azmin Ali, whose eyes were red-rimmed, said he had known Anwar was innocent from the start.

"I am thankful the verdict is not guilty; this proves the charges were a malicious political ploy, a false accusation," he said.

PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, looking calm, said the verdict proved that the evidence in the case was weak and could not stand in a court of law.

Anwar himself, on emerging a few minutes later, was immediately crowded by eager supporters waiting outside, who shook his hand and congratulated him. He was later stopped by a huge crowd of media at the entrance to the court



complex, clamouring to get closer.

DAP national chairman Karpal Singh said Anwar's legal team was prepared for the possibility of an appeal. "We are prepared, but there should be no appeal."

DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said the decision is not only a victory for Anwar, but one for Malaysians in that justice had been served. Asked if it also meant the judiciary is independent, he said

only that he hoped it was the beginning of an end to any form of injustice.

PAS vice-president Mahfuz Omar said the ground of acquittal should have been reason enough for judge Mohamad Zabidin Mohd Diah to have thrown out the charge against Anwar from the beginning. "Instead, they put him and his family through a long trial, and a lot of humiliation and agony."