

Anwar cries foul over delay in Najib-Rosmah subpoena appeal
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 20 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim questioned today the Court of Appeal's delay in hearing his appeal to compel Datuk Seri Najib Razak and his wife to testify in the Sodomy II trial.

The Opposition leader said the High Court has already set November 23 to hear closing statements before ruling on the sodomy charge levelled against him but that he was still asking for the prime minister and Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor to testify in the trial that began 18 months ago.

"I don't want to delay the case any further but the Court of Appeal should hear my appeal (before closing statements). In other cases, appeals are disposed of quickly," he said.

The PKR de facto leader said the matter raised questions over the judiciary's credibility, especially in light of allegations that Court of Appeal judge Datuk Abdul Malik Ishak plagiarised judgments in 2000 when he was still a High Court judge.

Pakatan Rakyat (PR) MPs have filed a motion in Parliament to refer Abdul Malik to a tribunal.

"Now his career depends on Umno, so he will support his political masters all the way, compromising the independence of the judiciary," Anwar said.

Judge Datuk Mohd Zabidin Mohd Diah ruled on October 6 that Anwar's lawyers had failed to prove "relevancy" in issuing a subpoena to the PM and his wife.

But Anwar's lawyers have argued otherwise, saying Najib's testimony could shed light on the disposition of the Opposition leader's accuser in the days leading up to the alleged incident.

Defence counsel Karpal Singh had said that as the prime minister had met Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan on the night of July 24 — two days before the latter accused Anwar of sodomising him — Najib's account of the meeting would "go a long way" in assisting the court.

"They had a meeting. How can you say it is irrelevant?" Anwar added today.

The Permatang Pauh MP also questioned the credibility of the judiciary, saying that the delay in hearing his appeal only reflected the unfair persecution against him.

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