

Najib: Anwar verdict clears BN of conspiracy claims
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PUTRAJAYA, Jan 9 — Datuk Seri Najib Razak has called rival Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's acquittal over a sodomy charge today an exoneration for the political conspiracy claims hurled at the Barisan Nasional government.

"Today's verdict shows once again that, despite what many have claimed, the Malaysian judiciary is an independent institution where neither politics nor politicians have any influence over the dispensation of justice," the prime minister was quoted as saying by Bernama Online today.

The prime minister added the ruling in favour of the opposition leader was testimony of his administration's adherence to the tenet of separation of powers

"As head of the executive branch, I respect the decisions of the other branch of government, the judiciary," Najib was further quoted in the report.

Trial judge Mohd Zabidin Mohd Diah ruled today that the prosecution had not done enough to prove Anwar had committed sodomy against former aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan.

Anwar, 64, was similarly indicted of sodomy over a decade ago and found guilty. He spent six years in jail before being exonerated.

The former deputy prime minister has maintained that his prosecution for sodomy was politically-motivated and a plot to kill his political career.

Today's verdict defied the expectations of political observers and even Anwar, who had alleged that a guilty verdict was predetermined.

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