

Sex not only reason for sperm in rectum, says forensic expert

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By Debra Chong

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 24 — Foreign sperm detected in the rectum can be inserted by means other than sexual activity, an Australian forensic pathologist told Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's sodomy trial today.

Dr David Wells, who was testifying for the defence, said penile penetration was not the only method to explain the presence of sperm in that area as there were other ways to leave a residue.

He named a few examples, such as through a surgical procedure or inserting an instrument called a proctoscope into the rectum, by pushing traces of sperm found outside the anal region into the cavity.

Dr Wells, who has written some 10 books on forensic medicine, said the use of a proctoscope could complicate matters more because one would not be able to discount the chance that sperm was pushed inside the rectum.

A proctoscope was also used by doctors to examine Anwar's complainant Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan when the latter sought medical aide two days after alleging he had been sodomised three years ago.

When defence lawyer Sankara Nair questioned if a plastic object, which had been raised in yesterday's court hearing, could have the same effect, Dr Wells agreed.

He also said that not all victims of sodomy would necessarily display signs of anal injury.

Under questioning from Anwar's defence team, Dr Wells clarified that such trauma from violent sexual activity would depend on the amount of force used and need not necessarily cause the anal tissues to tear or bruise.

The forensic expert had earlier told the prosecution the same thing.

Datuk Yusof Zainal Abiden had referred Dr Wells to his own book on the topic, and pointed out that the use of lubricant on the anus was among several ways that would not leave trauma scars.

The sexual assault specialist had been stumped earlier when Yusof asked, "If someone had tampered or planted sperm on the [rectal] swabs, that person must have had that particular sperm in his possession?"

Dr Wells replied that sperm and DNA were different things and added that the question would be better dealt with by a DNA expert.

Australian chemist Dr Brian McDonald who specialises in DNA is to testify tomorrow for the defence.

Anwar is charged with sodomising former aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan at a condominium in Bukit Damansara here between 3.10pm and 4.30pm on June 26, 2008.

He faces up to 20 years in jail if convicted under section 377B of the Penal Code, but will escape the whipping sentence due to his age.

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