

Wan Azizah: Sodomy slander was slow death
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By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 10 — An emotional Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's acquittal of his sodomy charge yesterday finally ended the pain and suffering she and her family have had to endure for the past two years.

The PKR president said she would not have been able to handle it if the High Court had delivered a guilty verdict on Anwar, and that the highly-publicised trial had left her emotionally drained.

File photo of a sombre-looking Wan Azizah holding onto Anwar (in dark glasses) as they arrive at the Kuala Lumpur High Court on January 9, 2012 for the verdict on Anwar's sodomy charge. — Picture by Jack Ooi

Anwar was yesterday acquitted of a charge of sodomising his former male aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan.

Judge Datuk Mohd Zabidin Mohd Diah ruled that the prosecution had not done enough to prove Anwar had committed sodomy against Saiful.

"To be honest I was too tired for a repeat of the sad episode of 1998. I was tired from being dragged into (a) long sadness... if abang Nuar (Anwar) was convicted, even though the kids have grown up, there would be no difference to our pain.

"It would have doubled," she was quoted by Sinar Harian as saying.

"How could it not, (this) body which has grown with age, physique and soul is not as strong as before. The sad news would have washed away all feeling," she said.

Recounting the moments before the verdict was read out in court yesterday, Wan Azizah said she constantly prayed to God not to allow her to be separated from her husband.

"For 2½ years we lived under pressure, dying slowly. Slander is a poison that kills," she said bluntly.

The presence of all her six children as well as their spouses gave her some strength and courage as it was rare of all of them to gather together except on special occasions.

"Our hearts were one, our souls were together," she said.

The 59-year-old grandmother recalled how nervous she was on the way to the Kuala Lumpur High Court, passing by the sea of supporters before entering the familiar-looking courtroom.

She said she was speechless and cried when the verdict was read out, amid shouts of joy from friends, relatives and the public.

"I held Abang Nuar close. Abang Nuar held me. I could not say anything but thank Allah.

"At that moment, all the pain left my body. The suffering left my soul," she said, and that the whole family stopped by the Segambut mosque for prayers after leaving the High Court.

"I thanked Allah for allowing us to leave the court with a happy heart.

"Allah, thank you. You have ended our pain."

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