

Nurul Izzah: Faith in Anwar's innocence fortified family
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 11 — Knowing Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was innocent of his sodomy charge gave Nurul Izzah Anwar and her family the strength and courage to support him, a support they would have maintained even if the opposition leader were to have been convicted.

The eldest of six of Anwar's children, Nurul Izzah said the whole family had mentally and emotionally prepared themselves for any possibility, including Anwar being imprisoned.

"What gave us strength is that our conviction in knowing that papa (Anwar) was innocent and we have an unfinished struggle. We have to fight for the future of the country," Nurul Izzah was quoted by Sinar Harian as saying.

Anwar was recently acquitted of a charge of sodomising a 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.

An emotional Nurul Izzah said the entire family had prayed for Anwar's acquittal, and that the night before the trial verdict was the most "worrying" night for her.

She recounted how her daughter, Safiyah, woke up in the middle of the night asking for her "papaTok" (Anwar).

The Lembah Pantai MP said even her young daughter knew that Anwar could have been "snatched away" from the family.

When asked what would she have done if the High Court had not acquitted Anwar, Nurul Izzah said she would have "hugged papa tightly and whisper to his ears and told him how much his family loved him, and would stand by him to the end, and that Allah would protect him."

"The moment the words came out of judge Datuk Mohd Zabidin Mohd Diah freeing papa from the charge, tears trickled down my face, mama (Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail) and my siblings one by one.

"Papa was free! I was so thankful to God... I looked for my siblings (in the courtroom) and hugged all of them," she said, describing the moments after the verdict was read out in detail.

"The (feeling of) peace could not have been described... the entire court complex was filled with tears.

"I want to fight with honesty, for the people. It does not end with papa's acquittal."

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