

**Sodomy II appeal could harm faith in courts, say Pakatan MPs**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**January 12, 2012**  
**By Debra Chong**

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 12 — The Attorney-General has the right to appeal against Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's sodomy acquittal but such a move could negate any positive effect in the judiciary's perceived independence, opposition MPs said today.

"I think if there's any appeal, it will destroy any so-called positive effect it's intended to achieve," DAP's Lim Kit Siang told The Malaysian Insider today.

The veteran lawmaker in the opposition Pakatan Rakyat (PR) bloc was responding to the prosecution team's recommendation last night for the A-G's office to renew its bid to convict Anwar of sodomy.

Lim said an appeal would be detrimental to the judicial system's image. — File pic  
"The government's proclamations of independence of the judiciary, that there was no political interference in this case, the credibility of this case will all be destroyed.

"There has to be restoration of confidence in the judiciary. The judiciary should not be undermined," he said, suggesting the public had little faith left that the courts were not subjected to political manipulation from the ruling government.

Lim said he hoped the A-G will not appeal against Anwar's acquittal.

Nurul Izzah Anwar also appeared to share her PR ally's concern.

"Every Malaysian has a right to seek for an appeal; although the final decision rests with the A-G," Anwar's eldest daughter, who is also a PKR vice-president, told The Malaysian Insider via a text message this morning.

"By the same token, every Malaysian has a right to a free and fair trial from an independent judiciary," the Lembah Pantai MP added.

Yesterday, Datuk Mohd Yusof Zainal Abiden, who had led the prosecution team in charging Anwar, told TV3, "With all the evidence, I will recommend to the Attorney-General Tan Sri Abdul Gani Patail a review of the case and to consider an appeal of the decision of the High Court of Kuala Lumpur."

His comment came on the back of pleas from Anwar's accuser, 26-year-old Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan and his family, to push for Anwar's conviction.

The Sodomy II trial was Mohd Yusof's last case. The 56-year-old Solicitor-General II, who was the third-most senior government lawyer has since quit the Attorney General's Chambers, according to a Bernama report.

Datuk Tun Majid Tun Hamzah, who heads the government's prosecution unit, told The Malaysian Insider his boss has yet to decide.

"The decision whether to appeal or not will lie with A-G or S-G (Solicitor General)," he said in a text message, explaining the authority was granted to only these two people.

Lim said that if the top government lawyer chooses to appeal the High Court decision that acquitted Anwar from the latter's second sodomy trial, it would cause more harm to the ruling Barisan Nasional's (BN) public image.

The Ipoh-Timur MP added, "For Pakatan, whether there is an appeal or not, the message is clear, the people are hoping for a change for the country."

Saiful and his family are hoping for another day in court. — File pic  
Anwar, the 64-year-old leader of the PR bloc was acquitted of a sodomy charge last Monday when trial judge Datuk Mohd Zabidin Mohd Diah ruled that the prosecution had not done enough to prove he had committed the act on Saiful, his former aide.

The judge noted the lack of full disclosure, as well as the unreliability of both the DNA evidence presented and the prosecution team's key witness, Saiful.

Since the acquittal, much focus has been on Saiful and whether the prosecution in the case would appeal the verdict, which is said to be a boost to the opposition pact.

Under heavy fire from Anwar's supporters, Saiful has since taken to social media channels Twitter and Facebook to voice his thoughts.

"My family and I hope the prosecution will bring this case to the Appeals Court," he had said.

The Attorney-General has until January 23 to decide if they plan to appeal the High Court's acquittal of Anwar.

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