

No evidence I'm gay, Anwar says
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Kuala Lumpur, March 1 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said that allegations of him being homosexual or bisexual are an Umno ploy with no backing evidence, in a no-holds barred interview with radio station BFM here today.

The Opposition Leader was asked several times whether he is a homosexual or bisexual, and he pointed out his status as a married man and a father as the answer to the question.

"They have tried and attempted, and they actually charged me twice. And there's not a set of evidence to support that argument," Anwar said of his critics.

"I'm a happily married man with six children."

Anwar (picture) is married to PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and they have five daughters and a son, the eldest of which is PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar.

When asked the question a second time by host Noelle Lim, Anwar declared the question irrelevant, and the issue as a result of Umno's propaganda.

"It's just an Umno propaganda and I have to endure these questions. It's not fair," he said.

The PKR de facto leader then conceded that being homosexual or bisexual is someone's personal matter.

However, he added by saying that concrete evidence is needed before someone is to be charged with being homosexual or bisexual.

Section 377a of the Malaysian Penal Code, sodomy and oral sex can be punished with up to 20 years in jail, and whipping.

Anwar was explaining that Umno has tried to portray him as being gay and the effort has failed, before he was asked the third time, to clarify that he is not a homosexual.

"Of course. I've made it very clear, I think," he replied, before sharing a laugh with Lim later over the tough questions.

Anwar was charged with sodomising former male aide Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan at a condominium in upscale Damansara Heights here in June 2008, a few months before returning from a decade in the political wilderness and winning back his Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat.

He was acquitted of the charge in January last year, after a lengthy legal battle.

It was the second time he has been prosecuted for sodomy after being convicted in 1998 soon after then Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad sacked him from his post as deputy prime minister.

The Federal Court overturned the conviction in 2004, paving the way for him to lead a loose

opposition pact to deny Barisan Nasional (BN) its customary two-thirds majority in Parliament and five state governments in the landmark 2008 election.

The ruling coalition and the opposition have been at loggerheads on the issue of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT), which is deemed sensitive in Muslim-majority Malaysia.

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