

Anwar trending on Twitter as news of sodomy conviction breaks

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Tweets expressing shock, dismay and well wishes exploded onto the micro-blogging website today as news broke that Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's five-year prison sentence for his sodomy conviction had been upheld by the Federal Court.

Since this morning, PKR leaders, journalists and activists inside the courtroom at the Palace of Justice provided blow-by-blow accounts as the case unfolded via social media.

The public's reactions on Twitter were mostly of unhappiness, as Anwar's supporters condemned and questioned the Federal Court's decision.

"Injustice happens because stupid people with authority dictates the legitimacy of your perceived truth #AnwarVerdict," tweeted @digitalkai.

Twitter user @Zulizwxn said that the world's courts were not as fair as Allah's courts, while @natilyfauzi said that Allah alone should judge this case as He knew better.

"I'm not into politics... only reason I'm following DSAI (Anwar) is to know the verdict.. logically, it seems like a conspiracy to me. #AnwarVerdict," wrote @shavimanutd.

@AHHAN17 said the next general election would be a disaster for Barisan Nasional (BN), and that jailing him had only worsened the situation.

"5 yrs for trumped up charges.. Unacceptable. The Rakyat must stand united. #AnwarVerdict," wrote @hooipeng1215.

Twitter user @dinesh_zezzero said Anwar was imprisoned because BN was afraid of him, while @Farishot said "putting him in jail a thousand times" would not rid their fear of him.

"Another Dark Day for Justice... JUSTICE = JUST ICE... It too can melt... #AnwarVerdict," tweeted @sreeganesh23.

"I don't want to live in this country anymore. :(#RakyatHakimNegara #AnwarVerdict," wrote @kavitagopalan.

However, there were also tweets from users welcoming and justifying the court's ruling, albeit to a lesser extent.

"Kalau tak bersalah kenapa tak berani angkat sumpah? 14 saksi kononnya tapi seorang pun tak dipanggil kenapa?" wrote @aliamirrazali. (If he was innocent why did he not dare to make a sworn statement? He supposedly had 14 witnesses yet why wasn't even a single one called?)

"Proven guilty. It's about time for Anwar to be lock and subside from Malaysia's politic. #AmanMalaysia," wrote @zeemzom.

"Who should be blamed that Anwar is in jail? He scrape through his first sodomy charge on technicality. Patut bertaubat tak buat lagi. (He should have repented and not repeated his actions)," tweeted @eddydaud.

"Anwar betul atau tak, dia je yg tahu. Yang aku tahu dia ada dan Malaysia pun porak peranda. Tak bersatu padu," wrote @NadAdni. (Whether Anwar is innocent or not, only he knows. All I know is that when he is around, Malaysia descends into chaos. Not united."

"Ini bukti yg mrk x akan setuju smpi bila2 sbb dh taksub. Mrk kata adil bila hanya berpihak pd mrk #poyo #AnwarVerdict #JP03 #Melakamajufasa2" wrote @WadyGI. (This is proof that they will never agree because they are obsessed. They will say it is fair only when the decision is in their favour.)

@ItsMeMirosh wrote: "Serves you right... "

But whether they supported the judgment or not, Malaysians extended their sympathy and admiration towards Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and her family for having to go through such trying times.

"I sympathise with DS Wan Azizah and her family/friends. From the bottom of my heart, may God lighten your burden during this trying time," tweeted Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan, the Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Minister.

"I feel really really sorry for Wan Azizah and her children. Have to put up with the much BS. And the burden of a Huge Lie," wrote Twitter user @pawsie.

"Highest respect to Anwar's wife, datin (sic) Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, the person who always stay by her husband side no matter what happen," tweeted @ImTweetheartGal.

"Dalam kes anwar ni 1 benda je aku nampak yg boleh kita buat contoh; jadilah sekuat dan setabah wan azizah," tweeted @nrnyi. (In this Anwar case, I can only see one lesson we can take away as an example for us: Become as strong and courageous as Wan Azizah).

After seven long years, Anwar's second sodomy case came to a close today when the Federal Court upheld his conviction and five-year prison sentence.

Chief Justice Tun Arifin Zakaria declared that it was "beyond reasonable doubt" that Anwar had sodomised his former aide, Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan, and dismissed Anwar's appeal against the Court of Appeal's conviction.

When reading his summary to a packed courtroom, Arifin said the judges found Saiful

to be a credible witness, and that they found ample corroborative evidence to support Saiful's testimony.

The judge also dismissed the defence team's argument of a political conspiracy, saying it remained an unsubstantiated allegation.

Anwar, the PKR de facto leader, will lose his Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat as the law bars anyone jailed for more than a year or fined more than RM2,000 from serving as a lawmaker.

The former deputy prime minister's legal battle in the second sodomy case began on August 7, 2008, when he was charged with sodomising Saiful in an apartment in Damansara.

The High Court in January 2012 had acquitted Anwar, but this was overturned by the Court of Appeal in March last year. The first sodomy case against Anwar was in 1998, after he was sacked from the government. – February 10, 2015.

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