

Justice served but Saiful's image battered, says prosecutor

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After Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's guilty verdict is upheld by the Federal Court today, deputy public prosecutor (DPP) Tan Sri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah said that justice has been done but it gave him no pleasure as Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan's life has been wrecked and forever changed.

He said the worse was Saiful went through seven days of courtroom cross-examination and all that Anwar's legal team threw at him.

"Even the process of justice was added to his suffering," he said in a statement issued to the media today.

The Umno lawyer also criticised Anwar for giving a statement from the dock, saying that unlike Saiful, he was not willing to be cross-examined.

"This was his right under the law, but he used it to also attack the prosecution, the judges and his former colleagues in the government.

"He also undermined the country's reputation," Shafee said.

Anwar was found guilty of sodomising Saiful at a condominium unit at Bukit Damansara, Kuala Lumpur, on June 26, 2008.

One of Anwar's lawyers, Ramkarpal Singh, said after the Federal Court delivered its guilty verdict that he was disappointed that points raised by the defence were not considered by the court.

"But we respect the decision and have to study it further to decide on the next course of action," he told reporters today.

He added that the only avenue left was for a review of the Federal Court's decision but said this can only be decided after they have gone through the judgement in detail.

Lead counsel Datuk Seri Gopal Sri Ram said that the bench had performed its judicial function and added "we have to accept it".

He declined further comment.

The Federal Court today ordered Anwar to serve a five-year jail term after it dismissed his appeal against conviction and sentence for sodomy.

Shafee was appointed DPP when the case was brought to the Court of Appeal.

When the case was on trial at the High Court, the prosecution team was led by former solicitor general Datuk Mohd Yusof Zainal Abidin.

The High Court, had acquitted Anwar at the close of the defence case on grounds that the integrity of the DNA samples could have been compromised.

Shafee said that this case would have been a straightforward case of sexual assault by an employer against an employee, but used to batter the judiciary's reputation.

He also said that Anwar had the opportunity to provide his own DNA sample as fresh evidence to prove his innocence but chose not to do so.

"I ask fair-minded people in Malaysia and overseas to consider carefully before forming an opinion and to review the actual evidence of the case."

Shafee also urged critics to read the Federal Court judgement and the previous judgements "word for word" as they provided the facts, however ugly.

"Some media appear to regard the Malaysian courts as acting fairly when they ruled in Anwar's favour and as compromised whenever they did not."

He said that rather than this story being about politics, it was a human story from the judiciary's perspective, adding that it was the role of the justice system to enable both sides to be heard in court. – February 10, 2015.

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