

UN body calls Anwar's detention illegal
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By Ram Anand

Calling the detention of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as illegal and arbitrary, a United Nations (UN) working group has urged for the former opposition leader's immediate release.

The call by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which comes under the UN Human Rights Council, was announced by PKR lawmakers today.

"The group has urged that Anwar be released and reinstate his political rights," said N. Surendran, the Padang Serai MP who is also part of Anwar's legal team.

Surendran warned Putrajaya not to ignore the UN body's decision, saying it could risk damaging the country's international reputation.

The multi-government working group held a hearing for over two months before reaching the decision, which was passed to Anwar's lawyers, who were the main applicants, in early October.

Anwar was imprisoned in early February this year after the Federal Court upheld a Court of Appeal ruling holding him guilty in sodomising a former aide in 2008.

Anwar's daughter, Lembah Pantai MP Nurul Izzah, said that she was grateful that the UN body had called for Anwar's release.

"It ensures the sharp decline in human rights under (Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak) administration will not go unnoticed," she said.

The working group consisted experts from Australia, Benin, Mexico, South Korea, and Ukraine.

The group was expected to make public their report this month, Nurul Izzah said.

Fellow Pakatan Harapan partners, DAP and Amanah, were also present at the press conference.

Both were represented by their parliamentary whips, Seremban MP Anthony Loke and Shah Alam MP Khalid Samad. – November 2, 2015.

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