

Parliament turns down Surendran's motion to free Anwar

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PARLIAMENT | The House has rejected an emergency motion tabled by N Surendran (PKR-Padang Serai) to debate the release of jailed opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim.

Dewan Rakyat speaker Pandikar Amin Mulia made the decision on grounds that the court had made its ruling on Anwar's case.

"I find that the conviction and punishment had been meted after a fair legal process in court. The detention of Anwar in Sungai Buloh prison came from a legitimate order," Pandikar said in a written reply.

Surendran tabled the emergency motion on Nov 23, after the Asean Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR) issued a statement on Nov 6, which demanded that Anwar is released without condition.

An unhappy Surendran today sought clarification during the House's sitting, chaired by deputy speaker Ronald Kiandee.

"I am unimpressed with the speaker's decision. If a ruling is meted out on this issue, then it can be debated in the House. Only the ongoing court case cannot be debated, due to *sub judice*," Surendran said.

However, Ronald declined to entertain him, citing the speaker's decision, released in writing today, to be final.

Surendran said: "The decision portrayed an element of bias. If we cannot debate the matter in the House, where else can we do it? Outside, they say (this falls under) Sedition Act.

"Every time we bring up a motion to criticise the government, it is turned down. It shows an element of bias."

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