

A letter on Malaysian developments

5 December 1998

Dear Sir,

I read the article by Peter Symonds, 'A legal farce: Malaysian judge orders Anwar's lawyer jailed', with a great deal of interest. After a long time I have finally seen a well-balanced report about the victims of the Malaysian tragedy.

Dr. Munawar Ahmad Anees has been used as an expendable pawn and a stepping stone by the Malaysian authorities in building up their concocted case against Anwar Ibrahim. Dr. Anees was the ideal choice for the authorities as he had everything going against him: he is a foreigner living in Malaysia, he is Anwar Ibrahim's friend and the government of his parent country, Pakistan, is unwilling to stand up for him. (The government of Pakistan is deeply indebted to Malaysia for selling palm oil to them on credit. They are willing to sacrifice a few of their nationals as long as the loan is not called.)

The initial charges of sodomy, for which Dr. Anees was summarily convicted and sentenced, formed the foundation of the subsequent case against Anwar Ibrahim. Yet, Dr. Anees was largely ignored by the media at large in their reports. His existence was only mentioned as an archaic pronoun, lost in the recesses of Bukit Aman.

'Friends of Dr. Anees' is the only group, hurriedly put together by a few of his innumerable friends around the world, which has the courage and determination to fight for the vindication of this international scholar. I am one of the founding members of this group. The group has mobilized support from international organizations and personalities for its cause. Amnesty has declared Dr. Anees as a prisoner of conscience, human rights organizations have condemned his treatment by the Malaysian authorities. The Canadian government has become directly involved in the case. Professor Alvin Toffler, who is on the advisory committee of MMSC, has strongly criticised the treatment of Dr. Anees and has threatened to resign from the board unless he is

released unharmed. Our group has launched a web site for Dr. Anees at www.dranees.org where you can find extensive details about his case and the support he has attracted.

Once again, I am indebted to you for carrying a story which does not ignore the faceless innocent victims of the Malaysian tragedy.

A.B.H.

See Also:

'A legal farce: Malaysian judge orders Anwar's lawyer jailed'

[2 December 1998]



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