

The Winding Road to Power: Anwar Ibrahim in Malaysian Politics

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Abstract : *The relationship between Mahathir Mohamad and Anwar Ibrahim was colorful, from friendship, fellowship to violent conflict and hostilities, even Anwar was slandered with sodomy and jailed and tortured in his cell. Anwar's struggle in Malaysian politics was full of sorrow and bitterness, after being released from prison in 2007, in 2008 he was jailed again on charges of sodomy too. But then he could be free and form an opposition against Najib Razak who replaced Mahathir.*

In 1997, when he became a finance minister, Anwar Ibrahim supported the steps of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He saved money by cutting state spending by 18 percent, cutting ministerial salaries, and postponing major projects. The major projects postponed by Anwar Ibrahim included a number of projects that were the mainstay of the development strategy designed by Mahathir Mohamad. In 1998, amid the worsening relationship between Anwar and Mahathir, Newsweek magazine named Anwar the "Asian Leader of the Year". In the same year, the youth wing of UMNO led by Anwar's ally Ahmad Zahid Hamidi indicated that they would raise the issue of cronyism and nepotism in the UMNO General Session.

Now Anwar has returned to the Malaysian political scene and is waiting for the promise of Mahathir who will hand over the reign of the Prime Minister to him. Indeed, Anwar's way of life was full of mystery and grief but there was no grudge in him for those who had imprisoned him for quite a long time.

Keyword: Anwar Ibrahim; Mahathir; Malaysia; Prime Minister; democracy; election; UMNO

I. Introduction

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad in 1997/1998 faced a severe monetary crisis and political turbulence. Mahathir had even friction and conflict with Anwar Ibrahim (his Deputy of Prime Minister) in terms of steps and policies to overcome the monetary crisis. In 1998-1999, the pro-democracy movement emerged in Kuala Lumpur, however, various groups were not convinced that reforms in Malaysia would succeed because the political format and the press system in the country did not support. The format of Malaysian politics since independence was dominated by the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) - the dominant party in the Barisan Nasional coalition which is at that time ruling - while the press in that country is generally controlled by political parties. Malaysia under Mahathir experienced political personalization that gripped the country and society.¹

¹James Chin and Ho Kai Leong(Ed.), *Mahathir's Administration: Performance and Crisis in Governance* (Singapura: Times Academic Press, 2002). [In-Won Hwang](#), *Personalized Politics: The Malaysian State under Mahathir*, ISEAS / Silkworm, 2003. Pawancheek Marican, *Anwar on Trial: In the Face of Injustice* (Kuala Lumpur: Gerakbudaya, 2009) and *Charade of Justice: Anwar's Third Trial* (Kuala Lumpur: Gerakbudaya, 2012). Herdi Sahrasad, *Asia Tenggara, Kuasa dan Kepemimpinan*, Jakarta: Media

It is about ten years ago was a disastrous month for Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. Anwar, the rising star that had sparkled, suddenly faded and vanished.²

That month Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad removed him as finance minister and PM deputy. In the same month, Anwar Ibrahim was expelled from UMNO, the ruling Malay party. At that time his position as party vice president. A few days later the elite police arrested Anwar at his home in Kuala Lumpur. He was herded like a terrorist. The disaster did not stop there. When he arrived at the police headquarters detention room, Anwar's hands were handcuffed behind his back and his eyes were covered in cloth. Malaysian Police Chief Inspector General Rahim Noor beat Anwar Ibrahim until he was battered. The former number two most powerful person in Malaysia was lying alone on the floor of his cold cell. In the following year, the court sentenced Anwar Ibrahim to 6 years in prison for a corruption case. In the case of sodomy, he was sentenced to 9 years in prison at the August 2000 trial. At time Anwar (51) will spend his old age at the Kemunting detention center. But, will his political career end in prison? Many journalists and analysts asked.³

II. Discussion

2.1 Anwar Ibrahim's Case

Media reported that Anwar Ibrahim was disrespectfully discharged on September 2, 1998, for allegedly committing indecent acts (sodomy) directed at him. But some international observers say that the action was due to a dispute with Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad, especially when the 1997/98 crisis hit the region. The accusation against Anwar Ibrahim was first carried out by the DAP Parliamentary Expert Karpal Singh in Malaysia after being fired from the kingdom and UMNO. Then Anwar Ibrahim began to set up the reform movement in mid-1998, after the emergence of the reformasi movement in Indonesia which led to the fall of the government of President Suharto. But Anwar is not powerful in struggle against Mahathir. He was fired, and prisoned.

At that time, detention and court proceedings experienced by him were highlighted by various human rights and democracy activists both domestically and internationally, but were unable to change the decisions of Malaysian court institutions which declared him guilty and continued to serve sentences above the power of attorney but were released on charges of

Institute and CTSS-UI, 2013. Herdi Sahrasad & Ma'mun Murod Al-Barbasy, *China, Asia Tenggara dan Adikuasa*, Jakarta: Center for Political, Media and International Studies Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta (CPMIS UMJ-LP3ES and Centre for Strategic Studies Universitas Indonesia (CSS-UI), 2019.

² Anwar is the rising star in Malaysian politics. In 1971, Anwar Ibrahim received a Bachelor's Degree in Literature from Faculty of Literature the University of Malaya. When at university, Anwar Ibrahim was known as a student movement leader who fought for social justice in Malaysian society when he was also known as a reformist and militant leader. At the international level Anwar Ibrahim was appointed President of UNESCO (1989-1991) and became one of the founders of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) in Washington, USA.

³ Maruli Tobing, "Anwar Ibrahim dan Peralihan Kekuasaan "

<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2008/11/28/07145066/anwar.ibrahim.dan.peralihan.kekuasaan?page=all>.

several mistakes. technically, but as soon as a group of judges discussing the case agreed that the treatment was in effect..⁴

Some noted that when the economic crisis threatened Malaysia in 1998, Anwar rejected Mahathir's plan to implement a fixed exchange rate system in his currency, so that the ringgit would not be affected by the crisis, a similar step that Prof. Steve Hanke had offered to the Indonesian President, Soeharto to implement exchange policy permanent. After this dispute and casual allegations against Anwar Ibrahim which led to the dismissal of Anwar Ibrahim from his position, in mid-1998, Mahathir applied a fixed exchange rate system and Anwar Ibrahim's position was replaced by Abdullah Badawi.



Picture 1: Anwar Ibrahim and Rizal Ramli (A National Leader and senior Economist) in Jakarta 2018.

In 1999, in a controversial trial Anwar was sentenced to six years in prison for corruption charges and a year later received an additional nine years in prison for sodomy charges. The Malaysian Federal Court then dismissed the allegations of sodomy and Anwar being released from prison in 2004. After being jailed as a political victim that must be sacrificed by Mahathir, Anwar then built opposition forces with Chinese and Indian minorities in a line he called Pakatan Rakyat. In 2007, Anwar began campaigning for the People's Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Rakyat- PKR). PKR is a central opposition party which is officially led by his wife, Wan Azizah Wan Ismail. But in July 2008, he was again arrested on charges of sodomy against a personal assistant.

Fortunately, in 2008, the situation has changed a bit, and opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim had a chance to strengthen the base of his opposition to run and win the election.⁵ At that time, in 2008, Anwar's trustee, Khalid Jaafar, considers that the political constellation in his country has changed because neither the map of UMNO's strength nor Barisan Nasional is

⁴ https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/dunia/2010/02/100218_malaysiaibrahim. See, https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anwar_Ibrahim

⁵ This view was expressed by Malaysian intellectuals Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Sumit K Mandal and Malaysian observer from LIPI- Jakarta, Dr. Alfitra Salamm in 1998, and that view has now changed due to changes in the situation in Malaysia itself of course

like in the past. Although eventually losing, Anwar managed to build his image and credibility as a strong statesman.

At that time, the current question that arises includes, Is Malaysia going to a new era and Anwar playing an important role in driving the reform movement or reformation in his country? Answering this, Anwar Ibrahim believes that in the end the Malaysian people will make their choice, in this case they have a strong desire to lead to significant change, out of the deadlock that many experience today. ⁶

One of the desires of the Malaysian people is the climate of freedom, good and clean governance and the establishment of democracy in the real sense. At the very least, Malaysia will come out of confinement, both in the fields of politics, law enforcement, and the economy and other fields.



Picture 2: Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad (right) with political figure Anwar Ibrahim (center) and Interior Minister Muhyiddin Yassin on June 1, 2018.

Anwar Ibrahim seems to be appearing as an alternative figure in Malaysia, when Malaysians are seriously craving for change, especially in terms of leadership patterns, democratic development and civil-style economics as Anwar Ibrahim is now carrying out. Even though it continues to be hampered, Anwar looks confident that the reformation in his country is now just waiting for the right time.

His success in elevating his party to the recent elections made the figure of Anwar Ibrahim truly a formidable opponent for UMNO along with Barisan Nasional who now still controls power in Malaysia. Can UMNO and Barisan Nasional be overthrown? Anwar said in public that there is no impossibility in this life if we have faith. ‘ There is no impossibility in politics if we hear people's voices. Before the election I told the

⁶. Usman Yatim, “Anwar Ibrahim dan Reformasi”, online media *Madina*, opini,, Jakarta, 2011

press in Singapore, we would win 70 seats in parliament. What they say: it's impossible. "On the evening of March 8, 2008, we won 82 seats." "Nothing is impossible if we have faith," said Anwar in bringing Malaysia to a significant change.⁷

Anwar saw UMNO with Barisan Nasional not to forever dominate the stage of power and politics in Malaysia. He believes, the opposition can also prevail in his country. This is his obsession, someday, the Prime Minister of Malaysia does not have to be from UMNO or Barisan Nasional but also from the opposition.

Will Anwar Ibrahim be the first Malaysian Prime Minister from the opposition party? Using Anwar's belief, this is indeed not impossible. Anwar believes that if he sees the conditions of UMNO and Barisan Nasional which he considers porous, the election can be carried out honestly with fair funds so the opposition will be able to win the election. "Our vote in the recent elections has surged, even though the election is a lot of cheating. If we cheat we get a big vote, then our honest election will win. The voice of the people wants this," said Anwar.

Anwar also stated, "intellectual colleagues also do not believe it can apply a political tsunami in Malaysia. Why don't they believe it? Because they read more about Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jurgen Habermas and Mohammad Arkoun, than reading people's consciences.

It is not wrong to read theories and approaches about post-modernism, deconstruction, even I suggest that our scholars and intellectuals read Derrida's, Habermas and Arkoun's books so that they do not miss. But don't forget what is struggling and turbulent in people's hearts and consciences.⁸

Anwar Ibrahim is a political student of Mohammad Natsir, a figure of Masyumi and our statesman. "After marriage with Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, I took it directly to Abah Natsir to ask for his blessing and guidance," said Anwar, who saw Natsir as his father. Natsir has taught Anwar how to incorporate Islamic idealism and political actions or behavior. Anwar attended and gave a speech at a seminar commemorating 100 years of Mohammad Natsir at the Selangor International Islamic campus, aimed at reviving Islamic thinkers and politicians who obtained In addition to seminars, Wadah and Quiz launched a book about Mohammad Natsir to be a reading material for the younger generation, entitled "Mohammad Natsir Da'wah on the Political Path to Politics on the Da'wah Line." In addition to Anwar, daughter Mohammad Natsir, namely Asma Faridah Saleh, who was present and gave her remarks, had stopped a few times with tears of sorrow because her father's thoughts and struggles were recognized and celebrated not only in Indonesia but also in Malaysia.⁹

Borrowing perspective Khalid Jaafar, Anwar Ibrahim's former press secretary, now Anwar has entered the third stage in his political life. The first stage began as a student leader at the Universiti Malaya. As president of the Malaya Universe Malay Language Association (PBUM), he championed the implementation of Malay as the national language. As president of the National Islamic Students Association of Malaysia (PKPIM), Anwar started blowing awareness of Islam among the younger generation. This movement was continued to be more widespread by establishing and leading for ten years the Malaysian Islamic Youth Force

⁷ Inilahkoran dan Kompas daily, 2 February 2008

⁸ Usman Yatim, "Anwar Ibrahim dan Reformasi", online media Madina, opini,, Jakarta, 2011

⁹ Anwar Ibrahim said this statemen at seminar Mohamad Natsir, Pahlawan Indonesia Yang Juga Diklaim Sebagai Pahlawan Malaysia, the Selangor International Islamic campus, Kuala Lumpur, 29 Oktober 2011.

(ABIM). Although Anwar's site is Malay-Islamic but his inclusive nature has been seen in the leadership of Anwar as president of the Malaysian Belis Majlis (MBM). In the second stage, Anwar Ibrahim made a decisive decision in 1981. Rumors at that time were that he would join PAS (the Malayan Islamic party). And President PAS gave an offer at that time. All ABIM and PKPIM leaders know the political gossip. And almost all predict and not a few who want Anwar to take the helm of PAS. But Anwar then chose to join UMNO, and grew up as a figure as well. The third stage was Anwar's move as a prominent opposition figure with his Alternative Front.

Anwar Ibrahim has been a controversial figure from the start. As a Muslim youth he was born in the midst of a cosmopolitan society on the island of Penang, which is more cosmopolitan than other societies in Malaysia. When he became a teenager he entered ABIM (Malaysian Islamic Youth) and became one of the main advocates of the Islamic movement in the neighboring country. The stamp of Islam remained attached to him because of his good Islamic knowledge even though he later entered UMNO (United Malay National Organization).¹⁰

When he was Chair of ABIM, Anwar was known as a proponent of the leading Islamic movement in the country. In various publications, no day has passed without mentioning himself as an Islamic leader later. His close relationship with various Islamic movements in Indonesia completes his identification as a future leader of the Islamic movement. His thoughts about the position of Islam in the neighboring country received serious attention from thinkers in the country. Even this Islam covers his fondness for books with liberal thinking in the West.¹¹

In its development, it turned out that the character presented by human-scientific reading was what made Anwar Ibrahim leave ABIM, enter the UMNO youth. At the same time he brought two faces in the new role. On the one hand, he appears as a modern Muslim who tries to maintain Islam in the midst of changing times.¹²

On the other hand, Islam is not shown as an old religion but as a way of living straight with its own measurements. Praying, having high personal character and thinking of reshaping people's lives which have been dragged by Western materialism, are strong religious signs.

¹⁰ Abdurrahman Wahid, Anwar, UMNO dan Islam di Malaysia, *Kompas*, Selasa, 20-10-1998. hlm. 4

¹¹ Abdurrahman Wahid, *Anwar Ibrahim & Paul Wolfowitz dari kaca mata Gus Dur*, paper, Jakarta: The Wahid Institute, 8 Oktober 2004.

¹² In this connection, Former President Republic Indonesia Abdurrahman Wahid had predicted that Anwar would be a key figure in the development of the Islamic world, that "the Islamic world" seemed to be at a crossroads. Gus Dur, Paul D. Wolfowitz and Anwar Ibrahim had met in Germany 2004 and that was very important. This was apparently also fully understood by Paul Wolfowitz, until then he came on a special plane to Munich and returned to Washington DC, after meeting together with Anwar Ibrahim and then with Gus Dur. Read, Gus Dur and Paul Wolfowitz both thought that Anwar Ibrahim's position, such as Saad al-Din Ibrahim, Secretary General of Muntada Al-Fikr Al-'Arabi (Club of Arab Thought), who had spent years in prison in Cairo, Egypt must be maintained as one of the moderate Muslim figures. In the environment of Muslim leaders, such positions cannot be filled by other people who do not have the right background.



Picture 3: Anwar Ibrahim and Prabowo Subianto

But the religious mind was accompanied by a more mature technical mind. He became more nationalist, bound to the welfare of all Malaysians and heeded the new world he was engaged in in the life of the nation. Thus he developed into an Islamic activist plus a true Malay Nationalist. And this is what dragged him into politics and socialized with Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad. He was willing to follow the pattern that fifteen years earlier had been taken by the Malaysian leader. It is not surprising if then the Prime Minister of Malaysia in the 90s appointed him Deputy Prime Minister. Are they not aspiring and have the same line of thinking? Therefore, Mahathir threw away all Malay politicians from the competition against Anwar. Even then Anwar became Mahathir's "crown prince," although eventually he was sacked by Mahathir himself in 1998. Anwar later became a political opponent of Mahathir, while previously dealing so well. Even in family relationships both have a unique relationship. Because Wan Azizah, Anwar's wife was also a fellow doctor who was the niece of Mahathir's wife.¹³

Malaysian political observers crossed the opinion of how much the chances of Anwar Ibrahim becoming number one in Malaysia. Some analysts think that Anwar's popularity shines along with the increasing feelings of anti-government.

Professor Joseph Liow, from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, said that now Anwar, the People's Justice Party, and the opposition faction who supported him as soon as possible consolidated their coalition building, especially as Anwar's credibility became clearer. But it is not easy for Anwar to complete his desire to become the number one person in the Malaysian elections next year. Because, the current Malaysian ruler (UMNO) is good at playing tricks that would threaten the prospect of winning the opposition.

¹³ Abdurrahman Wahid, *Anwar Ibrahim & Paul Wolfowitz dari kaca mata Gus Dur*, paper, Jakarta: The Wahid Institute, 8 Oktober 2004. Abdurrahman Wahid, *Anwar, UMNO dan Islam di Malaysia*, *Kompas*, Selasa, 20-10-1998. hlm. 4

For example, a court ruling against Anwar was claimed to be an attempt by the Malaysian government (UMNO) to start reforming by being independent and fair. Not to mention the government always sells the results of the Merdeka Center survey, which results in support for Najib is still at 59 percent.

In this case, James Chin, a Malaysian observer at Monash University, Australia, predicts that there will be intense competition between the authorities and opposition in the upcoming elections. Anwar's chances are great if the Malaysian elections are conducted fairly and transparently, but the current conditions are still 50-50.¹⁴

But there are also analysts who consider Anwar's free verdict to have no effect. "The verdict has no effect whatsoever," said Barry Wain, book author of former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad.

In terms of reform actions, Anwar Ibrahim was motivated by the reform movement in Indonesia. He sees that Indonesia has taken such a drastic step, which is to lead to genuine democracy, not illiberal democracy and mockery as it is believed to be taking place in Malaysia.

In this case, the reformation and democratization driven by Anwar Ibrahim is to go towards civil society and state. Anwar often reminds us that, in Southeast Asia, our problem should be rooted in the people, culture and needs of Southeast Asia. Anwar does not want Asia to be too dominated by Western discourse, both in the economic, political and intellectual fields. Southeast Asian Muslims need to start a regional dialogue based on our geographical position, namely with China and India, two countries that are emerging as a global economic movement. "

2.2 Opposition Leader

*"I have no personal problems with Pak Mahathir Mohamad. He indeed wronged me, imprisoned me but I forgave him. The problem is, I really don't agree with him. It is not a personal matter but concerns the system in developing Malaysia. "*¹⁵

The injustice felt by Anwar Ibrahim after his dismissal by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad as deputy prime minister in 1998 and his release into prison, made Anwar take a hard opposition path. Almost no prominent opposition figure in Malaysia, other than Anwar Ibrahim. However, the opposition figure who grew up from the Islamic student movement was not only a Muslim activist who dared to go in and out of his prison, but was also intelligent and opinionated. Anwar is a leading Muslim intelligentsia in Malaysia who is rich in ideas, transformative and imaginative.

It was Anwar who stated that Asia was emerging, as if heading for a new age. The rise of the Asian economy for Anwar was only one dimension of the continent's revival in a deeper, more fundamental and far-reaching way - an Asian Renaissance. In Anwar's perspective, it was different from the European Renaissance which lost its soul because it promoted "secular humanism which was uprooted from the roots of Judeo-Christian religion". The Asian

14 Herdi sahrasad, *Asia Tenggara, Kuasa dan Kepemimpinan*, Jakarta: Media Institute and CTSS-UI, 2013, pp.169-194

15 The above words were uttered by Anwar Ibrahim, former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, at a press conference, after he was a speaker at an international seminar welcoming 100 Years of Buya Hamka in Jakarta. Anwar Ibrahim was asked by many journalists, about the future of Malaysia, after he began to be taken into account in the political stage in the neighboring country.

Renaissance, on the contrary, has a strong foundation on religion and tradition. And while the European Renaissance is monolithic, the Asian Awakening is stronger because it is built on diverse traditions, "a cultural consortium" - Islam, Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity.¹⁶

¹⁷With such a big mind, Anwar goes into more specific themes: symbiosis between West and East, democracy and civil society, justice and law, ethics and economics, human economics, cultural primacy, Islam in Southeast Asia, and the future of Asia.

Unfortunately, when Anwar's book was first published in the original edition (*The Asian Renaissance*, 1996), where at that time the growth of Asia economies had moncer figures, it turned out that soon after 1997 the indicators of the Asian economy were destroyed. The crisis took Asia suddenly. And in Malaysia, the storm took its toll, none other than Anwar himself. Not only was he removed from the seat of deputy prime minister and finance minister, he became a pariah who was imprisoned. But now Asia rises as Anwar's own predictions. As Kishore Mahbubani looked at Asian society, Anwar also believed in the ability of Asian societies to rebuild Asian civilization, which far surpassed practical economic and political territory.

Anwar invites the Asian community to not be blinded by the growth of the Asian economy that is monetarist and forgets the rampant decay of bribery, nepotism and abuse of power. Anwar was also concerned about "religious practices without moral and ethical dimensions", so that they did not have enough power to prevent "moral decadence and erosion through permissible behavior and corruption".

As Farid Gaban noted, indeed Anwar is actually very optimistic that faith or religion - in its diversity in Asia - would be an important element if Asian nations wanted to "rediscover their souls and reconstruct their civilization". He also tried to answer a number of questions: Is it possible to build a civilization from various cultures? How to build a new Asian civilization? Are there real "Asian values"? Are there Asian contributions to universal ideas?¹⁸

Rich with reflection and search, Anwar dives into the recesses of consciousness and classical Asian treasures, then pops up with a confidence to be ready for dialogue - not confrontation - with the West. Farid Gaban saw that Anwar was not very convincing when he tried to reconstruct what was actually "Asia" - a concept that was indeed rather vague even for Asians themselves.

Anwar is one of the few contemporary Asian intellectuals - except perhaps Dr. Soedjatmoko - who chose the difficult path rather than simply dumping everything from the West or who, being too fascinated by the West, tended to deny his own.

Anwar paid special respects to the "pioneers of the Asian Renaissance" who "were able to transcend cultural distinctiveness to reach the universal plains": Muhammad Iqbal (Muslim poet from Pakistan), Rabindranath Tagore (Hindu poet from India), Jose Rizal (Christian novelist from the Philippines), and Sun Yat-sen (a Confucian Chinese nationalist hero).

Now, in 2012, after passing a trial that lasted almost two years, Anwar Ibrahim, 9 January 2012, was acquitted of volume II sodomy charges. From the start, the Malaysian

16 Anwar Ibrahim, *The Asian Renaissance*, Time Books International, Singapura, 1998. Every time the writer listens to his lecture, it seemsthat he has a broad intellectual repertoire as thinkers and statesmen.

18 Farid Gaban, *Renaissance Asia*, majalah Tempo, 24 November 1998

opposition leader insisted on denying the charges of sodomy of his former assistant, Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan.

Anwar called the demand a dirty attempt to kill his character carried out by the Barisan Nasional coalition in the face of the upcoming 2013 elections. Malaysians doubted the allegations. On Monday (1/9), the Malaysian Court acquitted the charges against him. "Justice has been done. I am free," said Anwar Ibrahim.

This case of accusation of sodomy is the second case of sodomy that befell the 64-year-old man in his life. In 1998, the former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia was also tried and imprisoned for the same case, although a few years later, Anwar was released from sodomy charges.

More than a decade ago, Anwar was in an important position as Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad. But after fighting with Mahathir, the charismatic figure was dismissed, beaten and jailed on charges of sodomy and corruption.

When the monetary crisis occurred in 1998, Anwar-Mahathir's dispute broke out. One of them, Mahathir, was outraged by Anwar's call to reform and stop corruption and nepotism. Anwar was fired and charged with corruption and sodomy. In a drama that shocked Malaysia and attracted the attention of the world, Anwar was then taken to court with dark eyes because he was beaten by the Malaysian police chief at that time.

In September 1998, Dr. Munawar Anees, former speech writer Anwar and Sukma Darmawan Sasmita Atmadja, Anwar's adopted brother, was arrested on suspicion of committing sodomy with Anwar. Both were sentenced to 6 months in prison after pleading guilty to "abnormal sex" charges with Anwar. They then withdrew their confession and appealed the verdict. The reason, they claimed to have been forced to plead guilty. On September 29, 1998, Anwar appeared in court and pleaded not guilty to charges of corruption and sodomy. Anwar appeared with dark eyes as a result of being beaten by Inspector General Rahim Noor Police. Later, Rahim, who initially did not admit his actions, finally apologized to the public for the beating.

During the trial, a mattress was used as evidence in court. The bed is said to have traces of Anwar's sperm. DNA test results showed that the sperm on the mattress was right in Anwar's possession. But Anwar denied his connection with the mattress. Anwar's defense team said that the DNA sample could have been taken from Anwar when he was unconscious after being beaten in detention. But High Court Judge Augustine Paul received the DNA evidence.

During the trial, Mahathir appeared on television to explain the arrest of his deputy. Mahathir has several times called Anwar guilty of sodomy even though the trial is still ongoing.

On April 14, 1999, Anwar was sentenced to 6 years in prison on corruption charges. Then on August 8, 2000, Anwar was sentenced to 9 years in prison for sodomy charges. In 2001, the High Court issued a ruling supporting Anwar's verdict on a corruption case. In July 2002, Anwar lost in the Federal Court over a corruption case. But in September 2004, the Federal Court revoked sodomy charges against Anwar and released him from punishment.

Anwar's second sodomy case occurred on June 29, 2008. At that time, Mohd Saiful Bukhari Azlan, Anwar's former assistant, reported Anwar to the police because he had sodomized him.

In Malaysia, the act of sodomy, even if carried out on the basis of liking, can be subject to a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and caning.

Since the start of the second volume sodomy case, Anwar insisted he was only a victim of political engineering carried out by the Malaysian government. According to Anwar, he was targeted as an effort by the government to stop the rise of the opposition party leader.

Today, January 9, 2012, Anwar was able to take a deep breath because the Malaysian High Court declared himself innocent of the sodomy charge. "Thank God, justice has been upheld," the senior politician told reporters as reported by the AFP news agency on Monday (1/9/2012).

How did Anwar do this after his freedom? Almost certainly, he is very attractive to the public. Malay poetry in Malaysia after Mahathir tends to crack. The Malaysian public has not forgotten that former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad once indulged his independence and accused senior coalition party leaders, UMNO (United Malays National Organization), PM Najib Razak, of being incompetent in advancing the party.

UMNO is now, accuses Mahathir, of not making any policies that have been effective since the 2008 election, so that they are weak and have no potential partners for the party's glory. In fact, the National Front where UMNO gathered, lost an absolute majority in parliament, and the opposition "rose up" in the 2008 election.

Mahathir, who is known as the old figure of UMNO, was unable to shake off his frustration with his juniors, including Razak as a cause of damage to UMNO.

UMNO began to weaken when it was taken over by Tun Abdullah Badawi. It was because he prioritized his family and a number of corruption allegations were given to him.

"Everyone also knows that their children often violate the law," said Mahathir commenting on his first replacement football.

"However, the damage was even worse when Najib Razak's leadership," Mahathir said irritably.

"At first I thought, it was difficult for UMNO to improve when Najib's leadership. But the reality is getting worse. He (Najib) was too busy to not have enough time to do repairs," said Malaysia's longest-serving PM.

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