

Habibie and Mahathir's 'muktamad' on Anwar's Munich surgery

BJ Habibie, 3rd President of Indonesia, passed away yesterday night but WFTV remembers the episode to get Anwar Ibrahim out of Malaysia for a back operation rejected by Dr M.

That was in 2001, and then Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad ended a move by Anwar, then in jail, to get treatment in Munich.

Here is a lesser-known episode because it was not reported in the local media. At that time, it was taboo for local newspapers to publish anything the government of the day did not want to read.

There were a lot of tractions on whether to let Anwar have surgery for a deteriorating back injury. It was not about which hospital or where else the surgery should take place.

It was whether he could have the surgery! That is

how the situation was for the man who is to become the next PM of the country.

Muktamad!

Rumours have it Anwar was beaten in jail on the very first day he entered the cell. We all know the story and who was behind the aggression.

The aggression led a black-eyed reformasi leader being brought to court and this became the symbol of the party that fought for his freedom.

However, there was more than the black eye. Anwar had suffered a back injury because of this ill-treatment. The government could not ignore this fact.

At the time of the calls by opposition leaders to let Anwar have surgery, Dr Mahathir was not listening.

He had a meeting with the opposition leaders on whether Anwar should have surgery or not. His

response was negative.

We remember this tense moment at a media conference in 2001 where Dr Mahathir said in a loud tone: "Muktamad!" which resonated in the conference room.

That was the big news on national television and in the local newspapers. It was like a sort of victory dance for these media outlets. Mahathir says 'Muktamad!' as in a refusal by Dr M to allow Anwar to have surgery abroad.

The point is by the time the stories of how Anwar was suffering from back pain in jail became public, there were talks of allowing Anwar to leave Malaysia and have surgery in Munich.

Why Munich?

Yes, why Munich of all places?

Lim Kit Siang wrote a blog post arguing that Abdullah Badawi should allow Anwar to have surgery in Germany.

But that was in 2004, before the general elections.

In the post, Lim wrote the DAP calls on the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to allow former Deputy Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to go to Munich, Germany for the endoscopic surgery “available only in Germany for his worsening spinal injuries.”

In 2001, Dr Mahathir made it clear he will never allow Anwar to leave the country for a surgery that could be done in Malaysia.

He said it to opposition leaders who met him to discuss the issue. Nevertheless, he changed his rigid stance on the matter.

Instead of forcing Anwar to have surgery at the Hospital KL, he would allow Anwar to have surgery in any hospitals in Malaysia.

The issue was more political to the government than taking up the health concerns of the opposition leader.

In truth, Dr Mahathir was worried that Anwar would never come back from Germany and would launch a western-led campaign against his government from Munich.

This was because it was seriously impossible for anyone to stand-up to Dr Mahathir and his Barisan Nasional regime in that period.

Hence, a freed Anwar from jail in Malaysia would have thoughts about toppling the BN from Munich. That thought must have crossed Dr M's mind, hence the loud and clear 'Muktamad!' in 2001.

Emissaries

The issue dragged on until after Dr Mahathir quit in 2003. And it became a problem in the hands of Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the new Prime Minister.

By then, Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Computed Tomography (CT) scans confirmed that Anwar sustained two new back injuries: friction of a facet joint and a prolapse of another disc.

Abdullah Badawi did not want to be the PM who frees Anwar from jail and allow him to campaign from Germany.

But there were intense negotiations in 2001 to get Anwar out of jail and to do the operations in Germany.

We believe the former President of Indonesia had a hand in the talks. There were certainly emissaries sent to discuss the potential of allowing Anwar out of Malaysia.

We know of the story in which people from the Prime Minister's office met with PKR and other intermediaries to discuss Anwar's surgery in Germany.

Among a certain group of reformists, there were talks of a chance to topple the Dr M regime from Munich. This went all the way to Putrajaya.

They were saying the 'men in black' from the PM's office met with PKR people to discuss the matter. They also said the former Indonesian President Habibie was aware of the talks.

But for the Mahathir government, it was a risky undertaking. They feared the close relationship between Anwar and Habibie.

Habibie

The president passed away yesterday evening after undergoing intensive treatment since his admission to the Rumah Sakit Pusat Angkatan Darat Gatot Soebroto on Sept 1.

According to people close to Anwar Ibrahim, the two leaders had a very close relationship and Habibie was extremely worried about the Malaysia leader's health.

After an operation in Germany, Habibie, who was living in the country had Anwar staying in his house to recuperate. Anwar has not forgotten Habibie's friendship in his difficult years.

Following his release from prison in 2004, Anwar had a spinal operation in Munich and stayed at Habibie's house.

"BJ Habibie was an individual I considered family, and he was very concerned about the suffering I

went through while I finished my operation after being freed from prison.

He thanked Habibie and the former Indonesian president's late wife Ainon for looking after him during that difficult time.

"He was a humble man, with lengthy and intelligent discourse and he was no ordinary politician," recalled Anwar in a Facebook post.

"BJ Habibie spoke from confidence as well as from conscience. This was something unique from a great figure and a great leader who will surely be missed by all parties," said Anwar.

He expressed condolences on behalf of his party PKR.

Tun Dr Mahathir also joined the list of people who issued condolences on the death of Habibie. He said he and Habibie were friends.

But we know how far was the relationship between Anwar and Habibie.

Warlords in politics is a bad omen in a democracy

Warlords in politics is a bad omen in a democracy because it creates a division in political parties while the divisionists claim it is their democratic rights.

Malaysia is an example of this type of political shenanigan. It was an established factor during the reign of the Barisan Nasional. It is now creeping in the Pakatan Harapan regime.

Pakatan leaders will deny that warlords have emerged within the coalition in power. But this is not how the public sees things.

A recent exposure of the warlords in Malaysia manifested itself after [the gay-sex scandal](#) that hit the PKR or the Justice Party.

Breaking the rules

The Pakatan regime broke all the rules that it stands for when it kept the minister accused of gay-sex in government.

This is undoubtedly a setback for democracy in the country. They followed what the Barisan Nasional was doing. As a matter of fact, the BN did take some drastic actions against a number of ministers over the years.

They diverted in the long run and they ended in the opposition because the people rejected their diversion.

Unfortunately, the Pakatan failed the test. When the sex video came out, the government should have dismissed the minister, carried out an investigation and re-instate him if he is not guilty.



Anwar Ibrahim and Prime Minister Dr Mahathir – the waiting game is on: Picture Credit: Anwar Ibrahim Twitter

But the warlords held the regime hostage. They could not accept losing their blue-eyed boy. They do not want to give an edge to the genuine leader Anwar Ibrahim.

Instead, they went against the party leadership, accusing them of plotting the downfall of Mr Blue-eyed.

They have the numbers in the Justice Party and though Anwar won the leadership tussle; he is not safe from their misdemeanour.

Summoning Anwar

Now the [warlords](#) have summoned the party leader to come and meet them to discuss 'reconciliation'. This after denying they were revolting against the leader.

They also denied they are part of a plot – albeit rumoured – that their group leader is bidding to become the next Prime Minister of Malaysia.

If they were not fighting for this prized position, then why did they go against their leader?

As a matter of fact, they divided the party at its core. This tells Malaysians they do not want their leader as PM. They even gave support for the current PM, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to remain as PM for a full 5-year term.

In all parties, the logic is, the members support the leader to become the PM, not the contrary. Nevertheless, only threatened warlords will undermine their own party leader.

However, we cannot say Anwar is weak or has no control over his party. By all means, this is a fallacy. He won the contest with an upper hand with the number of divisions across the

country supporting him.

The same divisions showed that Azmin Ali is not up to it in a battle of giants, simply because he is no giant.



Azmin Ali supports Dr Mahathir as full term PM while his party PKR made a deal for Mahathir to leave by next year! _ Credit: <https://www.flickr.com/people/52445638@N06>

Nonetheless, this is how everyone discovered the existence of the warlords who are summoning the leader.

Defeated in their quest to prevent him from taking over from Dr Mahathir and defeated in their fight against him, they are still adamant.

By all means, this does not augur well for PKR and for PH. They hold the cards in their hands and they can destroy the coalition in power if they decide to swing their votes towards the greedy opposition.

Gay-sex scandal

For those who do not know the story, a gay-sex scandal hit the PKR or Justice Party of Malaysia in June.

A few days after the Eid el Fitr, a series of gay-sex videos were released, and they went viral. A man who claims he is in

the video accused a minister in the government saying he is also in the video.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister supported the minister dismissing the video as 'fake'. He said with technology, anyone can do such videos.

He also said he too may appear suddenly in such 'fake' videos.

But later on, a police investigation found the video is not a fake video and that it is, henceforth, genuine. But they could not determine if the two actors are the minister and the aide who denounced him.

The party sacked the aid. The minister did not get the sack. The minister instead gave full support to Dr Mahathir to remain as PM while his party is pushing for the PM to quit by next year.

Infighting in PKR takes another turn with secrecy on

[sex-video](#)

Who is the Laskar Jihad founder?

The founder of the now-defunct Laskar Jihad paramilitary group died of a heart attack aged 58 this week in Indonesia.

Jafar Umar Thalib has celebrity status among Indonesians who know about his exploits in Maluku in the 1999-2000 religious conflict.

Laskar Jihad was based in Yogyakarta and supplied volunteers to fight alongside Muslims against Christians during the sectarian conflict.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/08/25/jafar-umar-thalib-firebrand-cleric-known-for-roles-in-maluku-conflict-dies-at-58.html>

In Indonesia, many call him Ustaz Jafar. His last action hero

moment was his intervention against a neighbour who played soul music loud at the time of the Fajar prayers.

Jafar and six other men went to his house, cut the electricity with a samurai sword. That happened in [February this year](#).

Jafar has a long history of engagements with the [Mujahideen](#) movement. He went to [Afghanistan](#) during its war against the [Soviet Union](#) in 1987.

He fought and studied for two years under the guidance of Jamilurrahman's [Jamaat al Dawa al Quran](#) in [Kunar](#) province.

Jafar met [Osama bin Laden](#) in 1987 in [Peshawar](#), at the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Although Jafar follows a radical [Salafi](#) school of thought, he rejected Osama Bin Ladin's Al-Qaeda movement, saying he renounces violence and terror ideology.

MALUKU CONFLICT

The news of Muslim families running for their lives on the Island of Maluku, particularly in the city of Ambon, he did not sit tight.

He believed the Muslim in Indonesia should organise a defence

for them. He created the [Laskar Jihad](#), a paramilitary group on January 30, 2000 as an effort to defend and protect [Moluccan](#) Muslims.

The group believed Christians in [Maluku](#) were attacking Muslims, burning their homes and killing those who resist.

It was a long [Maluku sectarian conflict](#) and his assembling of an army of men ready to fight for Jihad gave him fame.

Jafar limited the jihad to defensive action to protect Muslims from Christian attacks.

STONED TO DEATH

In 2001 the police arrested him for allegedly presiding over a makeshift Islamic court that ordered a rapist be stoned to death.

It is illegal under Indonesian law. He allegedly led the execution himself, though he was never prosecuted of his act.

With immense political pressure against the Lashkar Jihad, Jafar disbanded the Laskar Jihad group.

Watch the video here

He was also accused of attempting to overthrow then-president Megawati Sukarnoputri. Which he denied.

Many news portals in Indonesia reported [his passing](#).

They wrote: “Innalillahi wainnailaihirojiun [We belong to Allah and to Allah we shall return], ustad Jafar Umar Thalib has passed away at the Harapan Kita Heart Hospital.

Laskar Jihad was a Yogyakarta-based Islamic group.

[What it means for British Muslims to have Boris Johnson as PM?](#)

Hong Kong protestors do not

understand 'all is fine in Singapore!'

The photo above shows a protestor with an umbrella, a 'tool' used to cover faces in Hong Kong's protests.

It appears that Hong Kong protestors do not understand that all is fine in Singapore!

Hongkie protestors are nagging Singaporeans, saying the people of the tiny republic don't know how to fight for freedom.

For the protestors, the Singapore citizens have no understanding of 'freedom and liberty'.

If they don't understand these concepts, how can they start a fight to 'liberate' their country from tyranny?

This is what [Hong Kong protestors are saying](#) in general. They believe Singapore's government has a tight grip on freedom.

But they also think Singaporeans are pro-Beijing, believing no one should rise against their governments.

WHY PROTEST?

They also say Singaporeans have no right to protest, thus they do not understand what is happening in Hong Kong.

But to many Singaporeans, there is no need to go on the streets to burn government property.

In the city-state, police go around catching people who burn the national flag. They are also after people who throw the Singapore flag in the dustbin.

There is a whole process in handling the country's flag, which is a national treasure.

"What is there to change or to fight for in Singapore?" This is the common response we get when asking Singaporeans what is not going well in their country.

"We get what we want, usually," says a netizen speaking to WFTV.

After the opposition got a boost with the creation of a new party, the [Progress Singapore Party](#), tongues are wagging.

The youngest political organisation is already in the lead in membership numbers, beating the Workers Party.



Return our CPF protest in Singapore. Besides these protests, there are no other public demonstrations in the tiny republic.

Picture Credit: <https://www.flickr.com/people/studiokanu/>

it is targeting the young, with a strong message saying the ruling People's Action Party has gone astray from its original struggle.

The PAP, of course, is fighting back but it is the extent of change and the impact it will make on the people that will matter.

UNLIKE MALAYSIA OR INDONESIA

Singapore has kept a clean sheet against protests by locals. There are no street fights, no police blocks and no tear gas in Singapore.

Unlike neighbours Malaysia and Indonesia or Thailand where democracy has taken a different tone. Kuala Lumpur saw its last round of violent clashes on the streets last year.

A temple attacked by protestors ended up with cars burning and one death, that of a firefighter. This has left the country divided but there is no turmoil on the streets now.

Indonesia last saw violence in the streets of Jakarta after

the publication of the official Presidential elections results.

President Joko Widodo, declared the winner against Prabowo Subianto, got some unhappy people protesting.

A group of people went on the streets in Jakarta to bring down the government. Six people died after scuffles with riot police.

The police firing teargas and beating protestors were the highlights of the day. There is still tension in some HQ's in Indonesia but the streets are calm.

ALL IS FINE

In Singapore, almost everything is fine. Almost. There are indeed rising concerns about the future of the nation. The future of its health care and for sure, EPF withdrawals.

The PAP is certainly adamant on the issue regarding the EPF which is the employee's pension fund.

People were told it is a form of saving for old age. But with

more elderly people seen at work, the people are opening their eyes.

Is it really a fund for our old age, more and more people are asking.

“Singaporeans believe the EPF is their entitlement. If the PAP relaxes the rules and finds more creative ways to deal with the growing concerns, all will be fine,” another netizen says.

When the 40 thieves want a new Ali Baba: They unite

Ali Baba and the 40 thieves is a weird story on its own, but the Malaysian version is even weirder and here we tell you why.

The real Ali Baba story is one of thieving, greed and vengeance. But all along, the 40 thieves have a leader who dies at the very end of the story.

Ali Baba, a woodcutter, is also a thieving fellow, but he only stole from the thieves. He took a small loot from their famous cave but his greedy brother found out and forced him to reveal the secret.

COPY CATS?

All the elements of the Ali Baba story are in place in the Malaysian kleptocracy scandal.

In the real story, there a Morgana who is the backbone of the plots and who saves Ali Baba many times. But remember, the real Ali Baba is a humble, poor and hardworking person.

The difference is the local thieves have a fugitive businessman. He is the alleged mastermind of the loot of the century.

Morgana is a kind and intelligent woman who helps Ali Baba defend his family and the loot from the revengeful 40 thieves. But she could not prevent the murder of Ali Baba's brother Cassim who forgot the password to cave's entrance.

The thieves found Cassim in the cave and killed him.

The other twist in the Malaysian Ali Baba story is the chief here is out of business.



The key to the cave is now in the hands of a new team.
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=User:Azreey&action=edit&redlink=1>

He is caught early and is facing his destiny while many of the '40' thieves are still at large.

So, to make their life easier the members of the gang of 40 thieves are going around plotting to

undermine Ali Baba.

In the real Ali Baba story, it is Morgana who plays the role of masquerading and destroying the plots set by the thieves.

In the Malaysian story, the anti-kleptocracy squad has its Morgana, going after the looted money. But this Morgana does not do the same job as the original one. She is only a crime fighter, not a slayer.

Yet, with Morgana now in action in Kuala Lumpur, the thieving elements are constantly changing the plot.

They tried the evil plan of chipping the stone at Ali Baba's house, but it failed though many people showed up for them.

CONTAINING THE BIGOTS?

The leader in Malaysia's story says the 'bigots' has attempted to bring down the house. They are still trying.

They even went to see the highest leader of the house.

One wonders what they were discussing to the point the leader of the house refuses to give details. This leaves other members of the house hungry for information from a regime that professes freedom of information.

But what we understand is the representatives of the 40 thieves have lost the code word for the entrance to the cave.

The loot is still out there, it seems, and they want to lay their hands on it.

So they might have proposed for the leader of the new house to join them as the new 'Ali Baba'.

In this scenario, the Ali Baba will be the folkloric bad guy as we know he is according to urban legends. People keep saying 'Ali Baba and his 40 thieves'. But poor Ali, he only wanted to take a bit of the loot to feed his family.

He made it up to history in the real story by marrying Morgana to his son who became his brother's business manager.

Will the Malaysian Ali Baba make it up to history by getting rid of the 40 thieves?

We can imagine the conversation at the table when the reps of the thieves met the leader of the house. They would have said something like, 'You don't know the password to the cave?.'

Perhaps they were hoping the leader of the house would reply "Sesame". But he apparently said: Shazam! and he changed into Malaysia's Captain Marvel.

Mahathir has a new obsession with number 3!

On over three occasions the number 3 came out of Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's mouth.

The latest is his reply to local media hounding him a timeline for his resignation and handing power to Anwar Ibrahim.

He told reporters, "I will keep my promises but I do not know if it will be within two or three years timeframe."

During an interview with CNBC Mahathir says:

<<No, I will not go beyond three years.>>

This was in reply to a question on a timeline for his retirement which Pakatan Harapan was discussing.

TWO OR THREE YEARS MATTER!

Two years, or three years, it matters a lot for many. Hopes are high for a change in the country.

We all know the current crop of ministers are not flawless and reform is still backward.

We all heard of two years given to Dr Mahathir. But the PM did not seem to agree with the two years deadline.

There is also a need to clean [Pakatan Harapan of latency.](#)

Yet, some of his people (close associates) say there is a two-year deal for Dr M to quit and for Anwar to take over.

Anwar said it frequently. Many PKR leaders also agree on the two-year mandate to Tun Mahathir.

Some PKR leaders do not agree on the two-year term for their favourite PM. Does it mean Anwar will not be their favourite PM or are they afraid or unhappy if Anwar is PM?

Those questions will get their answers.

But after the CNBC interview, Dr Mahathir mentioned the number 'three' at least one more time.

He denies he said three years when the media sought answers. But the recordings are there to show he said he will not go 'beyond three years'.

Translated in real English it means he will stay for three years to the least which does not mean he will leave in exactly two years.



Mahathir pondering on whether to stay on for one more year or three more years? – Picture Credit: Facebook

Asian Tigers?

Dr Mahathir, speaking on 'Asian Tigers' says he [needs three years to fix the economic mess.](#)

He also says this will not make Malaysia into a 'tiger' but he as PM needs more time to put the economy on the rails so it can achieve and regain the status of 'tiger' in 10-15 years' time.

The three years, again in plain and simple English, may mean he wants to stay for three years!

On his birthday this week, Dr Mahathir did not mention the number three. But he made it clearer and in a bolder way:

<<I just want to finish my work.>>

Once again. In plain and clear English: It is saying 'Leave me alone!' and it is probably also hinting at 'leave me alone for three years.'

That is a lot of uncertainty about the two years mandate, right?

Can Anwar contain the split in PKR?

The video lucah (sex video) issue is not over and the investigation continues, keeping the suspense alive.

It also keeps the people busy with the guessing game, a great distraction to what is to come, perhaps.

But no one can deny that an attempt to break the PKR is in motion.

Political pundits are waiting for the inevitable and Anwar knows it unless the PKR leader is not in touch with reality.

No one can deny that a break-up of the PKR,

predicted since December last year, will also break Pakatan Harapan.

It is the direct consequence expected from the war between two major factions in the PKR.

Anwar may have won the leadership tussle played by remote control, but he has a monumental task ahead.

In this developing scenario, Azmin Ali's next move is crucial.

Will he support Anwar's leadership or maintain the challenge against the boss with the support of some party MP's?

As a matter of fact, with the official destruction of the cover of a parallel leadership in the party, loyalties are at stake.

Anwar is now aware of the challenge and of the existence of a group that is fermenting its own coup.

It is also possible the show of support for Azmin is a direct consequence of the freedom of expression practice.

The PKR is different from other political formation. Its leadership is more open to criticism and this allows dissent.

But there is abuse of the freedom to challenge and

to express to the point a faction is born to overtake the 'ruling' faction.

This is where Anwar's task is made more difficult.

Roping in the rogue elements who signed the document of support for Azmin will not be easy.

Many of them have only one thing in mind: Stay in power at all cost. They can deny this fact but we will see how many will quit the posts if the party splits.

One good sign – we hope is news that the initial number of 20 MP's ready to jump ship from the PKR is reduced.

They were reportedly ready to form a new party or join Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's Bersatu.

Fresh reports put them at 15 but we cannot be certain with the unabated efforts made to break the PKR.

Nevertheless, it is needless to say there is no doubt if the breaking up happens mean another stoppage in Anwar's PM bid.

What will Anwar do to keep the PKR together and subdue the 'rebellion'?

He can promise better posts for the likes of Azmin, Zuraida Kamaruddin and some others in the event he becomes PM.

He may also make it possible for Azmin to be seen as the eventual successor in the PKR leadership challenge.

But if he faces resistance from the pro-Azmin grouping, there is the extreme possibility Anwar may chip them off the block.

The PKR leader has sufficient evidence of their collaboration with forces external to the party to undermine his leadership.

The party also has cause to clean its stable from greedy MP's and ministers who have forgotten how to say the word 'reformasi'.

Heads will roll but at this very moment, it appears Anwar will keep the party firmly in his grip.

Anwar won leadership tussle but Azmin's next move crucial

Anwar Ibrahim conducted a master class at the PKR retreat, getting [Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad](#) to finally show up on his side.

The loser at the weekend is Azmin Ali because of his glaring absence.

<<This was the ultimate chance for the deputy President to come and tell the crowd he is not the man in the video and he supports his leader.>>

Or he could have used the platform to lambast his leader if he felt this was the appropriate time to do so.

With Dr Mahathir show of support for Anwar's leadership at the party's retreat, it is a double defeat for Azmin, the Economic Affairs minister.

[Azmin Ali's absence speaks volume](#) of the party's future and of his future in the party.

Rumours are still out there that 20 or more MP's and YB's and party officials may jump ship from the PKR after the video episode.

Some say the number is 28, based on those who signed the document lambasting Anwar for his stance on the video issue.

It is clear Anwar's statement that if the police find it conclusively that it is Azmin in the video, the latter should resign had spooked the 28 Azmin men and women.

But it is the way the media – including Malaysiakini – presented Anwar statement that triggered Azmin's harsh response to “tell him to <<muhasabah>> and look into the mirror.”

It showed Azmin on the defensive and ready to hit back at anyone who wants him to vacate the prized ministerial seat.

Azmin is still on the warpath even though Anwar offered an opportunity to patch up and move forward.

The party will surely ask questions on the absence of many pro-Azmin MP's and YB's at the retreat.

Unless it is not a sane thing to do to ask questions anymore?

Azmin is the deputy President a post he fought hard to win against serious contenders in the party and he misses an opportunity to come and claim the scalp of his direct opponents?

This raises a lot of questions and it leads to one constant: In politics when MP's and high officials shun party meetings and a retreat it shows that something is fishy.

The tone adopted by Azmin and his supporters in the party, including the Menteri Besar of Selangor shows there is a wider rift expected.

Perhaps this will lead to a battle royal within the party's instances and some will leave the political organisation to form their own.

Whatever it is, the crisis is far from over in the PKR and in the Pakatan Harapan.

Anwar may have won a tactical battle that has tightened his grip on the party apparatus for now but it is certain there are many still in the party that want to overshadow him.