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Use legal avenue to clear name

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MORE than the fact that he dares to take a very high personal risk by making a statutory declaration alleging financial improprieties against the former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, it is the accuser's unique position that adds weight to the accusation.

Datuk Abdul Murad Khalid is no ordinary accuser. He is an accuser whom anybody with shady or improper business and financial dealings should fear.

The former Bank Negara assistant governor knows a lot of intimate details concerning the business dealings of people close to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

For years, the slightly-built and mild-mannered central bank officer wielded considerable influence in Anwar's Finance Ministry.

He was the principal implementor of many of Anwar's business dealings because he was among the few top civil servants who possessed deep understanding of the economy, business and high finance.

He is a good man and a knowledgeable civil servant. But like many young and not-so-young people who came under the spell of the former DPM, he was, as he confessed in the statutory declaration, "exploited and made use of".

Having known Anwar since the day he was brought into Umno by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in March 1982, and Murad from the later part of the 80s, I dare say that the latter's sworn allegation is the most damning indictment of Anwar's years at the Finance Ministry.

Murad was no doubt one of Anwar's most powerful operators during that period. He was respected and even feared because he knew his stuff.

Someone told me that Murad had gone to the same sekolah agama (Islamic religious school) as another of Anwar's former operator, the former Umno Youth chief, Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

It may seem that the only way for those implicated by Murad to clear their names is to do what Dr Chandra Muzaffar is doing - fight fire with fire.

Since Murad resorted to legal recourse by making a statutory declaration, it is only fair that those wishing to clear their names should also use the same avenue.