

**Anwar primed for Sunday's 'state of federation' speech**  
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Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim is preparing a major policy speech to be delivered on the first-year anniversary of the ground-breaking March 8, 2008 general elections.

Probably no speech of the Pakatan Rakyat leader is being awaited with so much expectation that it is billed as his 'State of the Federation' address, to be made at the Shah Alam Municipal Council hall on Sunday afternoon.

anwar ibrahim special briefing 280209PKR parliamentary and state legislators from throughout the country together with their cohorts from PAS and DAP are expected to throng the hall to listen to an overview of the nation beset by deepening economic woes and political crises on several fronts.

In other words, the occasion is conducive to the kind of oratory that seeks to offer the PKR faithful the inspiration to sally forth against a Barisan Nasional determined to derail an adversary it initially underestimated and now overcompensates for the miscalculation with tactics brazen and bold.

On the surface, the speech is to mark the first anniversary of an occasion few would have dared to envision a year ago: the derangement of the balance of political power in Malaysia, previously heavily tilted in the Umno-led coalition's favour.

No politician has done more to alter that half-century status quo in power relations than Anwar Ibrahim.

His tireless stumping for an opposition coalition, in which his PKR was the adhesive that held together a theocratic PAS and the stridently secular DAP, more than any other factor, was responsible for the denial to the BN of its two-thirds majority in Parliament.

BN's loss of control over four states legislatures and failure to regain another traced in scarlet the extent of their political diminution.

### **One which rival Umno president's speech**

In the last few decades, the main political speech of the year belonged to the Umno president on the occasion of his policy address to party's annual general assembly.

Though that address, in the 22 years that Dr Mahathir Mohamed declaimed from that annual platform, would become an occasion for much sound and little substance, Umno's domination of the media ensured maximum coverage.

And the BN chorus boys were readily on hand in check-in their scripted laudations.

One effect of the political tsunami that occurred a year ago is that the annual address of the Umno president is no longer the year's momentous political pronouncement.

Sunday's speech by Anwar Ibrahim could go a long way in supersession, a development to

be welcomed if only because democracies must be averse to a dominant set of vocal chords.

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