

**The tides turn for Anwar this week**  
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This is the week the good fairies of fortune have chosen to smile on Anwar Ibrahim because for several prior to this one, the parliamentary opposition leader was under apparent siege.

Ructions within his party and heightened attacks by adversaries on his morals and judgment combined to do the man down.

From early February when a slew of MPs began exiting PKR, the sands began to shift from under Anwar's feet.

Departures of MPs from PKR had the effect of converting the ongoing theatrics of Zulkifli Noordin into a party-threatening spectacle, raising doubts about Anwar's judgment and the viability of PKR.

NONEBut beginning this week, a couple of happenings dropped plumb into his lap. These have worked to ebb the tide that was running against him.

Given the way fortunes shift in Malaysian politics, these turns are scored closely for their power to move a public – partly Internet-informed and partly mainstream-media accessing – to one or the other side of the political divide.

For Anwar, the events that flowed in his favour began with Dr Chua Soi Lek's election as MCA president, the victor beating into second place what must surely have been Umno's choice for the post, Ong Ka Ting, a late entry into the race for reasons that will become obvious in a bit.

A Chua victory meant that the attorney-general preferring sodomy charges against Anwar while declining to charge Chua, under the same section of the penal code, for an act the former health minister had himself admitted committing exposed the AG as transparently biased.

The obvious thing to do now is for the AG to withdraw the sodomy charge against Anwar, to save the government from being accused of hypocrisy.

Alternatively, as an afterthought, he could charge Chua, a decision that would expose the government to complications too nettlesome to contemplate.

Better to swallow pride than for the government to persist in unpardonably bad judgment, which would be the case if the AG continues with the prosecution of Anwar and ignores the need to charge Chua.

The list of the government's derelictions is bad enough without the charge of patently evident hypocrisy being added to it.

The government's credibility gap – the fault line between its rhetoric of good intentions and actions that run contrary – is already in the condition that can't take more downgrades.

Sliding back on top of greasy pole

It would suffer another downdraft should its MPs decide to refer Anwar to the privileges committee.

The opposition leader is accused of misleading the House on the past record of Apco and its role in the Najib Razak administration's communications strategy.

As promised, the explanation, supported by documents, given by Anwar to Parliament on Tuesday was an exercise in forensic argument and will be difficult for his accusers to rebut.

Apco's ties to putrescent dictators and administrations, such as Sani Abacha of Nigeria and Narendra Modi of the state of Gujarat in India, are enough to imply complicity in crimes against humanity.

Unless Apco can adduce proof that it was not involved with notorious regimes and the Najib administration can similarly demonstrate that its ties to the communications experts are a thing of fantasy, Anwar has tendered enough evidence to the House to be free of mendacity that Parliament has been asked to impugn.

In the teeth of the compelling case against Apco made by Anwar, the response of Khairy Jamaluddin that Anwar, too, has ties to some individuals connected to Apco is like saying that Dr Mahathir Mohamed's ties to the despicable Robert Mugabe make the former PM somewhat guilty of the crimes of Zimbabwe's dictator.

Khairy, as Umno Youth leader, had to say something in defence of his tattered government. But sometimes silence is preferable to lame and ham-fisted extenuations.

It was all in all a good week for Anwar.

What with the large crowds he has been attracting to his current road shows, he is sliding back to the top of the greasy pole, thanks to an electoral happenstance and an ably reasoned argument backed by credible documentation.

What was it that Goethe said about the relentlessly questing? "Salvation is for those who never cease to strive."

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