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Proof of Anwar's double talk

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Parti Keadilan Rakyat's de facto leader came under a barrage of criticisms this week for his open attack on Barisan Nasional government policies and BN leaders at a number of huge gatherings organised by his party or the DAP where PAS flags were also seen.

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is stumping for the opposition camp which is made up of DAP, PAS and his own party in the hope of denying the BN from capturing two-thirds of the seats in Parliament. He is travelling everywhere in the country and making negative statements against the coalition.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is chairman of the BN coalition and a former cabinet colleague of Anwar, said the former deputy prime minister was only good at talking and making empty promises.

He said there were many things he could have done when he was education minister and also when he was the deputy prime minister and "so what is he complaining about?"

"But he is still making promises when he knows that he cannot deliver on those promises," he said.

Even just president Dr Chandra Muzaffar did not pulled punches when he lambasted Anwar for speaking differently now from what he used to say and do when he was a cabinet minister in the Tun Dr Mahathir government.

He called on non-Malays not to

be taken in by the multi-ethnic stand of Anwar now. "Today he is taking a totally different image and it is sad that quite a lot of non-Malays believe in this man. He is saying today that he wants to abolish the NEP and this is music to their ears.

"We are so communal that we cannot evaluate a person objectively," said Chandra, who was one of five speakers at the The Star-Asian Centre for Media Studies Public Forum on the 2008 general election on Monday.

Chandra said: "If Anwar becomes prime minister, it will be an unmitigated disaster for Malaysia."

Abdullah agrees.

Anwar's close friend of 30 years and former tennis partner Datuk K.S. Nallakarupani described the former Umno deputy president as a man with many faces saying that "he has a different face for an urban audience and another for the rural folk." Nalla echoed Chandra's comments, saying: "I know his story in and out. I know his character in and out. My advice to Malaysians is don't ever trust Anwar Ibrahim."

Many others joined in the open-season attack on the PKR's chief campaigner.

The latest was *New Straits Times* deputy chairman Datuk Kallimullah Hassan, who in his commentary on Wednesday, wrote: "You know what they say about politics, right? That it is the art of the possible; that there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies.

"Therefore, it was not really surprising to see academic and reformist Chandra, a once staunch political ally of Anwar breaking his silence with a castigating indictment of the man who was once his friend."

"For 17 years Anwar was in the highest ranks of Umno and the Barisan Nasional, and for 17 years, he asked Malaysians to give him their trust and believe in him. Many did.

"Today, Anwar is again asking Malaysians to place their trust in him and the DAP and PAS.

"But what did he say then? Perhaps the 1995 general election, the last one in which Anwar led the BN campaign, may be worth revisiting.

"Almost 13 years ago, on April 21, 1995, while campaigning in Banting, Selangor, then deputy prime minister Anwar had this to say: "The DAP, PAS and Parti Melayu Semangat 46 leaders are so power crazy that they are willing to manipulate the people for their political ends. Such leaders who could easily lie are only interested in power and have no regard for the well-being of the society and the country"

"On the pledges by the DAP, PAS and the now defunct Semangat 46 to abolish taxes, Anwar, who was also finance minister, said on April 23, 1995: 'If we abolish taxes, where are we going to get funds to carry out development like building schools and mosques? They can make promises

but we have to ask ourselves whether they have the capacity to fulfil their promises.'

"Today, Anwar says the opposition pact will reduce the price of oil, which is heavily subsidised by the government if they come to power."

"On the Barisan Nasional, Anwar said on April 13, 1995: 'People should use the government's remarkable track record as a yardstick to measure the efficiency of the BN in administering the nation.

"Unlike the Opposition, which is fond of making empty pledges and promises, the country, under the BN, is respected worldwide. We should not become ungrateful citizens like the opposition.'

"On the 1995 opposition manifesto, Anwar said: 'The opposition manifestos contain promises that cannot be fulfilled'."

Kalimullah wrote: "This time, the opposition manifestos promise goodies for Malaysians. The DAP wants to give RM6,000 to each family, PAS and PKR want to lower the price of oil and give money to single mothers, newlyweds, young aspiring businessmen and many others.

"On PAS, now his strongest ally, and which was then led by Datuk Seri Hadi Awang, Anwar had this to say: 'The people should reject PAS for it has failed to promote the welfare of Muslims in the country. The insincerity of PAS's struggle is evident from its co-operation with the DAP to deny the Malays their rights for a brighter future'

"Today, PAS is still propagating the same theme in the 'green belt' states of Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu and is working together with Anwar's PKR and the DAP in

Penang. Hadi Awang is still president of PAS.

"What were his views on the DAP and PAS in general?"

"Anwar had this message for voters in 1995: 'The opposition parties are harping on racial sentiments to disrupt harmony. PAS and Semangat 46 are churning racial sentiments among the Malays while their ally, the DAP, in wooing Chinese votes, is attempting to create hatred against the government and the Malays.

'We should not allow ourselves to be made tools of the opposition parties'."

"What did he think about the opposition DAP-PAS-Semangat 46 pact?" asked the commentary.

"It's a threesome khalwat; a marriage of convenience. The parties do not have common objectives and each follows its own agenda."

"Today, the difference is that Semangat 46 has been replaced by Anwar's PKR. The DAP and PAS are led by the same people who led them in 1995.

"And did not the current BN chairman and prime minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi say a week or so ago that the DAP-PKR-PAS pact was a coalition of convenience because the three parties each had different dreams and ideologies?"

"In his 17 years in power, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim stood for many things. Today, he has taken a different stance.

The BN, despite all its flaws, is still consistent."

Kalimullah ended his commentary by saying: "I sympathise with what happened to Anwar but I will not carry that burden of guilt. Neither should the country"