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Anwar's fate hangs in the balance

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USUAL TACTIC: If the PKR de facto leader loses his goal of becoming PM in the next polls, he will claim that BN has cheated

THE 13th General Election will determine the fate of Parti Keadilan Rakyat de facto leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. And the chances are he will see the end of his obsession to become the prime minister of Malaysia.

He had cheated me and Umno into believing that he was supportive of Umno's struggle and wished to join it. And he was welcomed. It was a clever move for only Umno could make his obsession to become PM a reality.

Pas, whose struggle seemed to be more in line with Anwar's pretensions as a Muslim zealot, would not be able to meet his expectation to be PM. Pas never won federal elections.

His strategy nearly succeeded but his base desires came in the way. He failed. Expelled from Umno, he immediately decided to make use of the

opposition parties, Pas and the DAP, to achieve his objective.

He founded his so-called Justice Party and persuaded Pas and DAP to form a kind of opposition coalition. The group lost in 1999 and in 2004. But in 2008, the opposition captured five states, one Federal Territory and denied Barisan Nasional the two-thirds majority at federal level.

Excited by this partial success, he openly declared that BN members of parliament would defect to his side on Sept 16, 2008, and he would become PM. But the defections did not take place. His ambition was once again frustrated.

Now he has to place his hopes in the 13th GE. The strain is showing on him. Belief in him by DAP and Pas has waned. There is now talk of other candidates for the high office from Pas.

Scandals followed him everywhere. He was once again charged with sodomy. The court acquitted him on technical grounds. Muslims, including Pas backers were outraged by his defence of Israel.

The US makes it clear that Anwar is their candidate for PM. This does not sit well with Muslims in Malaysia.

While he seems to be looking for victory in the 13th GE, he is clearly

preparing for defeat. If he loses he will claim that the BN cheated at the polls, that the Government manipulated.

Already he has laid the groundwork for his expected accusations of election fraud. His strategy invariably include demonstrations. That is his trademark.

In 1974, when I became education minister, he got university students to demonstrate over the alleged death from starvation of a Malay boy in Baling, Kedah.

This was nonsense. In Malaysia, no one dies of starvation, least of all in a Malay village. The villagers simply would not let this happen. They would send food to anyone who is starving. It turned out later that the boy had died of natural causes. There was food aplenty in his house.

After Anwar joined the government, there were no more demonstrations in Malaysia. Then he was sacked and immediately demonstrations started again.

His people plagued Kuala Lumpur with demos every Saturday. People stayed away from the city, not wanting to be caught up in the demonstrations. Traders lost business.



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad is the fourth prime minister of Malaysia