

**What's with Anwar's new look, asks Awang Selamat  
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BY RITA JONG**

Umno mouthpiece Utusan Malaysia's fixation with opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim continues. Now it's questioning his "plumped up" looks.

In an article published in its weekend edition, *Mingguan Malaysia*, it said Anwar, 67, used to have a sunken face but now has fleshier cheeks and no creases.

"His cheeks also seemed a little swollen. From the response in social media and blogs, many believe that this could be due to plastic surgery or botox," said its columnist Awang Selamat, the pseudonym for its collective editorial team.

"A PKR assistant leader has denied this and claimed it was medical allergies. However, people doubted such denial and believed that this was merely a cynical response. Among the other comments posted on blogs were 'are Malaysians that stupid?'"

The columnist said Anwar, compared to other leaders, looks tired and has lost his vibrancy.

"If it is true he had undergone plastic surgery or botox to look handsome and smart, what is wrong with that? He just wants to look young.

"But I can't help but to question, if at all this makeover is true, then which would be more important? His looks or the party?"

Awang Selamat said that since Anwar had failed to fulfil his promise to take over the government in the last general election he should be concentrating on the party, not his looks.

"Shouldn't he be trying makeover the party to improve and to restore the rakyat's confidence instead of stepping out with a new look?"

The Umno-owned newspaper has continually targeted opposition leaders including Anwar, and DAP's Lim Kit Siang, Lim Guan Eng and Karpal Singh, causing numerous defamation suits to be filed against it.

In January this year, the High Court awarded Anwar RM45,000 in damages after a series of articles said to have deliberately misrepresented his statement in an interview with BBC to suggest that he was supporting homosexuality.

The judge, in allowing Anwar's suit, said Utusan did not act professionally as expected of the press, and that neither did it practice responsible journalism when the newspaper did not even bother to amend the articles immediately.

Anwar has another RM100 million defamation suit pending against Utusan Malaysia, and others, over news reports alleging that he was linked to the recent armed intrusion in Sabah.

In December last year, Karpal, the DAP national chair and Bukit Gelugor MP, won a

RM50,000 defamation suit against the newspaper for articles it published which implied that he rejected Islam as the official religion of the country.

In June last year, Guan Eng won his second defamation suit against Utusan. The High Court ordered Utusan to pay the Penang Chief Minister RM200,000 in damages over an article titled "No More NEP" in 2008 which claimed he said the New Economic Policy would be abolished, resulting in protests held against him at the Penang government headquarters in Komtar.

In December 2011, Guan Eng also won his suit against the newspaper for making 'malicious', defamatory and untruthful statements about him. The court ordered the daily to pay RM200,000 in damages over its article titled "Guan Eng's rudeness" which painted him to be anti-Malay and anti-Islam.

Last Friday, Utusan again found itself slapped with a defamation suit by DAP adviser Kit Siang for allegedly implying he manipulated the DAP central executive committee election. The suit was filed on the same day the newspaper published an apology to Kit Siang and Guan Eng over its September 9 report on the controversial Tanda Putera film.

The report alleged that Guan Eng had tried to block the screening of the movie in cinemas in Penang to hide the rude action of a DAP leader depicted in the film.

The DAP leader was identified in the report as Kit Siang, who it alleged had urinated in front of the then Selangor menteri besar's residence during the riots on May 13, 1969. Lim had repeatedly stated he was not in Kuala Lumpur during the riots. – September 29, 2013.

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