

Nurul Izzah on working with Mahathir who jailed her father
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Anwar Ibrahim's daughter tells forum of her initial struggle working with the man who had removed her father from government, adding that she has remained civil towards Mahathir.

PETALING JAYA: After almost two decades of going back and forth to visit her father in prison, PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar said it was initially difficult to meet the man who had removed him from government – Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Although, in a striking turn of events, her party is now allied with Mahathir, she said it was not easy.

“You’re talking about close to 20 years that have passed by. Years of going to and from the prison cell to visit my father,” she said in a report carried by The Star.

But despite any initial problems she might have had with Mahathir, whose party PPBM is now part of the Pakatan Harapan opposition pact, Nurul said she has remained civil towards him, even inviting him to a fundraising dinner on Valentine’s Day this year, the report added.

She was responding to banker Nazir Razak at the World Economic Forum on Asean 2017 in Phnom Penh yesterday. Nazir, who is the brother of Prime Minister Najib Razak, had asked her to speak on her first meeting with Mahathir after all that had passed.

Nurul had earlier given a talk about her political evolution at the forum. She then invited questions and Nazir asked: “Can you share a little bit more about your first meeting with Mahathir Mohamad after everything? Was it so easy to forgive him?”

Nurul’s father, Anwar Ibrahim, had served as Mahathir’s deputy from 1993 to 1998. He was also finance minister from 1991 to 1998, and a member of Umno at the time.

Although seen by many then as a rising star in the government, Anwar fell out of favour and was sacked by Mahathir in 1998.

He was later charged with sodomy and jailed for corruption. Following his release, he became the opposition leader, helming PKR which, along with its allies, touted him as the prime ministerial candidate.

However, he is now serving a five-year jail sentence on a second sodomy charge.

Mahathir is now chairman of PPBM, which was established last August and formally joined the opposition bloc earlier this year. Pakatan Harapan now consists of PPBM, PKR, DAP and Amanah.

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