



ROMEN BOSE

# SHATTERED HOPES

The Promise, Reality and Collapse of New Malaysia's  
Pakatan Harapan 1.0 Government



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An international correspondent with over twenty-two years of reporting experience in the region, Romen Bose heads a crisis management and political communications consultancy. He is a close confidant of many Malaysian decision-makers and the upper echelon of the country's political elite, having worked as a political communications consultant for former Malaysian Premier Najib Razak for six years.

Before setting up his own consultancy, Romen was head of Asian social media intelligence at IHS Markit and worked as a senior foreign correspondent with international news agency AFP based in Kuala Lumpur. He was the founding president of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Malaysia and a senior producer with the English service of *AlJazeera International* when it opened its regional base in Malaysia. Prior to this, Romen was the Indochina Bureau Chief for *Channel News Asia*, Assistant Director for the north-west India region at the Singapore Tourism Board and has also consulted for the United Nations. Romen has also researched and written extensively on the Second World War and its impact on Southeast Asia.

## ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *SHATTERED HOPES*

‘The book reads like a fast-paced thriller! PH1.0 began with so much hope and promise but ended so shockingly! I particularly enjoyed the climactic first chapter as well as the ones on the grumpy grandpa and Tommy Thomas. By far, the most detailed account of the backstage manoeuvring, clashes, and backstabbing that marked Dr Mahathir Mohamad’s second attempt to shape the future of our country.

A blow-by-blow account of how he managed to work his way back into power and try to impose his will and rule on a changed Malaysia. Perhaps the only constant was the distrust between him and Anwar Ibrahim and there are fascinating insights into how Mahathir never intended to hand over power to Anwar as well as a close-up look at the Attorney-General that neither Mahathir nor the Malay rulers wanted in the first place.’

—Joceline Tan, political columnist, *The Star*

‘A compelling behind-the-scenes account of a pivotal turning point in modern Malaysian history, deeply reported and full of fascinating detail and colourful characters. *Shattered Hopes* pulls back the curtain on the machinations of politics in Malaysia at a critical time. Required reading for anyone interested in the country and its future.’

—Mike Chinoy,  
Former CNN Senior Asia Correspondent

ALSO BY Romen Bose

*Final Reckoning: An Insider's View of the Fall of  
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Pakatan Harapan 1.0 Government

Romen Bose



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*To my wife, Brigid, and our daughters Lara, Olive, and Cilla.  
And to the memory of my late uncle, Mrinal Kanti Dutta.*





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## Preface

The initial idea for this book arose during a lunch meeting I was having with my long-time friend and agent, Chris Newson, at the Wolseley in London, in late February 2020, just before the Covid-19 pandemic placed the world under lockdown. As we were discussing a few projects, my phone suddenly began buzzing with alerts and messages as news began trickling in of the sudden power grab by the new Perikatan Nasional (PN) coalition from the reform minded Pakatan Harapan (PH1.0) Government in Malaysia.<sup>1</sup>

Despite my self-imposed exile following the fourteenth General Election (GE14) in 2018, I had been closely monitoring the events in Malaysia through my numerous contacts and friends, who were in and out of the government and power. I was, therefore, aware of the fragility of the then Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad's, hold on power.

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<sup>1</sup> In order to avoid confusion and provide clarity, I have labelled the coalition and government led by former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and which had won GE14 as the Pakatan Harapan 1.0 or PH1.0 coalition and government. This is not to be confused with the Pakatan Harapan 2.0 or PH2.0, known as the National Unity Government formed and led by Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in November 2022. Although some of the coalition members remain the same, the PH1.0 Government and coalition was led and directed by Mahathir, while Anwar remained in the political wilderness and was not involved in much of what took place during PH1.0's time in power. This book, on the whole, deals with the PH1.0 Government.

But I must admit that, despite being aware of the various undercurrents and backroom machinations that had begun within Mahathir's circle of cronies and political leaders long before 9 May 2018, I was still surprised at the speed with which a much acclaimed virtuous and multiracial PH1.0 coalition—that was attempting to rid Malaysia of its cronies, corruption, racism, and inequalities—had, in a spate of twenty-two months, not only imploded but been replaced by a group of ultra-nationalists that were the very antithesis of 'A New Malaysia'.

This hope of 'A New Malaysia' was what caused voters to abandon, in droves, the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, which had ruled the country since its independence in 1957, in favour of the promises of reform and change made by the PH1.0 coalition of parties.

Knowing my familiarity with the key players and what was transpiring on the ground, Chris immediately suggested that I start working on a book. I, however, wasn't convinced that there was a book to write.

After all, PH1.0 was only in power for twenty-two months, and so, how much really could have happened to warrant a book?

Actually, quite a lot, it would appear.

Recalling the numerous conversations I had during 2018 and 2019 that exposed the privately held bitterness and disappointment of several staunch PH1.0 supporters and senior leaders, it was clear that what had transpired needed to be written down.

This book is not just for posterity but more as a guide for a future generation of Malaysians, on what to do in order to hold on to the trust of the people and more importantly, what not to do so as to prevent the country from being hijacked and led by a coterie of narrow-minded and power-hungry political leaders. To quote former top diplomat and political columnist Dennis Ignatius, who had been an unabashed PH1.0 supporter and activist:



Many have expressed disbelief that one man could be so cunning and manipulative and wonder whether it ascribes too much to the nonagenarian. Mahathir may not, of course, have orchestrated everything but he certainly knew how to light or stoke fires here and there and then exploit the ensuing angst and alarm to further his agenda. Looking at all his statements and actions over his twenty-two months in power, a pattern emerges that suggests he orchestrated the downfall of his own multiracial government in order to build something more to his liking. Having used non-Malays to defeat UMNO in GE14, he cynically planned to defeat the non-Malays by forging an all-Malay coalition that included parties that were defeated in the same elections . . .

. . . (And) in the face of the sustained assault on Pakatan Harapan's legitimacy, non-Malay politicians dithered, too afraid to challenge Mahathir for fear of upsetting the apple cart. Lim Kit Siang protested that, 'lies, falsehoods, fake news and hate speech cannot restore the dignity of any race or nation,' but he, along with other DAP leaders, carefully avoided any direct criticism of Mahathir. Even Mahathir's derogatory use of the term 'foreigners' to describe Malaysia's ethnic minorities evoked no strong reaction from Kit Siang or Guan Eng.<sup>2</sup>

I hope those in power and others seeking it spend time to read this book and understand the message, instead of shooting the messenger. I, of course, remain fully responsible for any and all mistakes and errors and apologize in advance for them. I have also attempted, in good faith, and to the best of my ability, to corroborate and verify the various events, comments, and issues raised in this book and believe that it is a fair commentary and

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<sup>2</sup> Ignatius, Dennis. 2021. *PARADISE LOST: Mahathir & The End of Hope*. Kuala Lumpur. Page 94.

of public interest. They also form the core of my belief as to what transpired during those twenty-two months. I have, in my possession, copies of all documents cited, most of which have long been available to the public. I have also taken the creative liberty to dramatize certain events and incidents, based on my understanding of what transpired, in order to make it easier for readers to follow how events unfolded. So, I stand corrected should any person, organization, etc., mentioned in this book dispute or disagree with my account of events. I urge them to come forward with documentary evidence and proof, which I will be happy to include in a future edition. Should you wish to reach me with new information, ideas, or comments, my email is [romen@hotmail.com](mailto:romen@hotmail.com).

In writing this book, I must thank my editor at Penguin Random House SEA Thatchaayanie Renganathan for the amazing work she has done yet again on another one of my books and also several of my close friends and fellow journalists (who wish to remain anonymous), who have spent time reading and critiquing my early drafts in order to make them the best they can be. I would also like to thank my good friend Jeyathurai Ayadurai MBE, Jennifer Ayadurai, Francesca Nathan, Savita Kashyap, Ms Jeyaletchumi, my brother Ajoy, and my sister Anita, for all their support and encouragement.

But my biggest thanks go to my amazing and long-suffering wife Brigid for being the kind, compassionate, and caring person that she is, and in putting up with all my shenanigans in getting this book complete. I love you to the moon and back.

I would like to dedicate this book to her and to our daughters Lara, Olive, and Cilla, who will hopefully find their dad's ramblings of interest. I would also like to dedicate this book to the memory of my late uncle, Mrinal Kanti Dutta, whose love of learning and interest in the world around him made him an essential source of

reference on almost any topic. I celebrate his memory with a glass of warm water, some Jacob & Co. Cream Crackers and a slice of dried-out toast. He would have appreciated that.

—Romen Bose  
London  
2 August 2023



# Chapter 1

## The Day PH1.0 Imploded aka *Akibat Mahathir Merajuk*

'*Astaghfirullah!*' he thought to himself, as the car stopped yet again and then crawled along slowly in the congested evening traffic along the suburban highways surrounding the capital, even on a Sunday!

He needed to get to the hotel and get there quick, but it was still miles away.

If he didn't get there soon, if he did not make it on time . . . he didn't want to think of that.

The various factions had all gathered at the hotel, and they were no longer listening to reason. They were enraged and bitter, and they wanted blood.

But once they pushed the button, there would be no going back. Their actions would cause the end of something that so many had sacrificed for and worked so hard to build.

As he looked out the car window, at a blur of buildings and cars, he spotted people strolling about in their Sunday best, dining at restaurants and enjoying a day of rest. He wondered if they realized that everything was about to change.

His colleagues and him, seated in the convoy of cars, had been charged with stopping this from happening, and this he had promised to do. But could he actually deliver?

The young cabinet minister knew the much-touted multiracial and reform-minded government of second-time Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad was on the verge of imploding, and he was hoping to convince the powers that be to stop it, to cease fire. At least for the moment. But he knew it would not last.

On that Sunday, 23 February 2020, the then recently discovered Covid-19 viral threat—it had yet to become the global pandemic that we now know—was seeing Chinese cities in lockdown and thousands of deaths globally. But Malaysians were more focused on the political drama and intrigue playing out in the corridors of power in Putrajaya and Petaling Jaya. This had people enthralled by various rumours of power grabs and new political alliances.

These strong rumours were boosted by reports claiming the formation of a new Mahathir-led political coalition—wait, wasn't he leading the current coalition government?—that would exclude the Chinese-led Democratic Action Party (DAP) and former Deputy Premier and opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim's Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR). And parliamentarians, including the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) lawmakers, had supposedly signed statutory declarations (SDs) in support of Mahathir serving as prime minister until the next general election, instead of passing the baton to Anwar mid-term as had been agreed.

This would mean the end of the PH1.0 Government and, with it, the dreams and hopes for reform, equality, and justice in the country.

Twenty-seven-year-old Syed Saddiq bin Syed Abdul Rahman knew he had only minutes to stop this from happening.

And his involvement had started so innocuously.

A handsome young man with a broad smile and sharp features speaking of his Arabic ancestry, with wavy hair gelled back and a soft voice with a slight lisp, Syed Saddiq was educated at the Royal Military College and the International

Islamic University Malaysia. He was also widely known in the debating community, having won Asia's Best Speaker award at the Asian British Parliamentary Debating Championship three times.

Although he initially supported BN, he became a political icon when, in 2016, he joined twenty-four other youths in a group that called themselves Change Led by the Young Generation (Challenger), which published a statement rejecting the then Premier and BN President Najib Razak's leadership following the 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) scandal.

Then 'retiree' Mahathir, who had been out of office since 2003, was very impressed by Syed Saddiq's motivation and energy and the admiration was mutual, with Saddiq becoming the head of ARMADA, the youth wing of BERSATU or The Malaysian United Indigenous Party (Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia), the party founded by Mahathir in 2016 following his departure from UMNO. Syed Saddiq also sat on BERSATU's Supreme Council and became a member of Mahathir's kitchen cabinet, constantly seen with, and doing the bidding of, the nonagenarian.

Syed Saddiq was seen, and I believe, remains, the face of modern Malaysian politics.<sup>3</sup>

Charismatic and with a disarming wit, Syed Saddiq's belief in multiracialism, multilingualism, integrity in governance, and commitment to Malaysia's vision of becoming a developed nation meant he was head and shoulders above many of his political contemporaries in seeking to better the lives of all Malaysians, especially the country's burgeoning youth.

Syed Saddiq deeply respected Mahathir and the former Premier's twenty-two-year contribution to the building of modern Malaysia, but Saddiq had differing views on race, strongly subscribing to the need for a more multiracial and corruption-free

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<sup>3</sup> This, despite the fact that Syed Saddiq was found guilty on four charges of criminal breach of trust, misappropriation of property, and money laundering in November 2023. He is currently appealing the conviction.

Malaysia, which had often put him at odds with his erstwhile mentor. More importantly, I believe he knew that despite his best efforts, the promised power transfer to Anwar was not going to happen.

As part of the agreement with Pakatan Harapan (PH) in the flush of victory following GE14, Mahathir had promised to step down as PM within two years and hand over power to Anwar. Although that time was now almost up, and despite his numerous statements on the transition of leadership, Mahathir had still not made it clear exactly when he intended to leave office.

Anwar's supporters were now pressing Mahathir for a handover date, suggesting the two-year anniversary of the historic GE14 elections which would fall in May 2020, but the ninety-four-year-old Prime Minister refused to be drawn.

Two months earlier, in Doha, Mahathir had implied a delay in the power transfer, saying he might have to stay in power after 2020 to fix issues he had inherited from the previous government before handing over power to Anwar.

Following weeks of reports that a new Mahathir-led Pakatan Nasional coalition—eventually renamed Perikatan Nasional or PN—was being formed, with a bid by the pan-Islamic party PAS to push through the parliament a motion of confidence in Mahathir to serve his full term instead of handing over power, Anwar had gone to see ‘the old man’ at the Prime Minister’s Office in Putrajaya.

Following a ‘cordial’ meeting, Anwar told the gathered media the much-anticipated transfer would be determined during a meeting of the ruling PH1.0 coalition on 21 February 2020.

‘I tend to believe that he will continue leading the country until the end of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit (in November 2020),’ said Anwar.<sup>4</sup> He said Mahathir

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<sup>4</sup> Mustafa, Muzliza, ‘Anwar Ibrahim: Malaysia’s Transition of Power to be Determined This Month’, 13 Feb 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/malaysian/malaysia-politics-02132020170744.html>.

assured him that he was not involved in the signature campaign to get lawmakers to endorse Mahathir completing his full term, and Mahathir had even told Anwar ‘emphatically’ that he would step down as promised.

However, I believe Syed Saddiq knew this was one of his mentor’s gambits to buy time, because Mahathir wanted to ensure that there was a ‘Grand Malay Alliance’ that was in power and which would necessarily exclude DAP, Anwar as well as Anwar’s faction from power.

Laying his heart bare to aides and close friends who had gathered at his place, Syed Saddiq reportedly said that although he was ambivalent about Anwar, the young politician didn’t really believe in the concept of ‘Malay power at any cost’ and was more interested in maintaining the Pakatan Harapan ethos and cooperation with DAP as well as PKR.

However, he knew Mahathir wanted to ensure Anwar and DAP were not in the government and that the current politicking was all part of that.<sup>5</sup>

Mahathir had the numbers in parliament and a plan for a late February or March 2020 parliamentary session would likely see the Malaysian Islamic Party or Parti Islam Se-Malaysia’s (PAS) motion of confidence in Mahathir or a motion insisting that Mahathir continue until the end of his term as PM.

If this happened, it would be game over for Anwar as the majority of MPs would then be on Mahathir’s side, and there was no way there would be a transfer of power to Anwar anytime soon.

And privately, Syed Saddiq acknowledged what only Mahathir’s inner circle knew and that was the fact that Mahathir was really not ‘officially’ involved in the current machinations.<sup>6</sup>

This was because Mahathir had orchestrated the whole thing ‘using numerous levers, proxies and it was a game of push and

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with PMO Source 2, Putrajaya, 11 Sep 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

pull'. 'Although Mahathir was not directly issuing instructions etc., the stars had started to align in the direction of giving Mahathir the majority he needed in parliament to carry on as PM till the end of his term,' Syed Saddiq reportedly told his people.<sup>7</sup>

The reality was that Mahathir had given instructions to 'various individuals' to carry out his wishes, and Mahathir's involvement was buried within layers; so it was impossible to directly point fingers at Mahathir and thus, 'Tun had plausible deniability in all of this'.<sup>8</sup>

The group was told that a large number of MPs from UMNO, PAS, BERSATU, the National Trust Party (AMANAH), the Sarawak Parties Alliance (Gabungan Parti Sarawak or GPS), and the Heritage Party (WARISAN) had signed statutory declarations in support of Mahathir, and Mahathir had more than 112 MPs on his side. Even former premier Najib Razak had signed an SD although Najib's SD came with conditions.

So, Mahathir's plan was now for MPs in parliament to call for a motion of confidence at the next parliamentary sitting. As part of the alleged plan, certain individuals like PAS President Abdul Hadi Awang, AMANAH President Mohamad Sabu (Mat Sabu), former UMNO Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein, and others were to make statements and say 'certain things' in parliament, alluding to the need for a motion of confidence in Mahathir to serve his full term as the prime minister.

However, the plan was fraught with danger because Mahathir had used several different individuals as proxies and had hidden his involvement under so many layers that neither did he have complete control over what would happen, nor did he have any guarantee or assurance by the people carrying out the plan that it would be fully executed or would succeed.

<sup>7</sup> Zoom interview with BERSATU leader 6, 10 Nov 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Hisham had reportedly been rounding up support within his party. Economic Affairs Minister and PKR Deputy President, Azmin Ali, was doing the same in PKR. Mat Sabu was bringing AMANAH's support, and Hadi Awang would ensure PAS support. Mahathir had allegedly also gotten others who guaranteed GPS and WARISAN support for the motion.

The aides were allegedly told that Mat Sabu was very loyal to Mahathir and would even be willing to work again with PAS if Mahathir insisted, as the mood for Malay unity was very strong and this was something that 'any informed Malay MP would realize'. As such, it would be political suicide not to support any move that aimed to strengthen 'Malay unity'.

However, the confirmation for the plan and its likelihood of success would only be known when the list of speakers was released just ahead of the parliamentary session as that would show if the right people had chosen to speak out and whether or not support for Mahathir had been fully sewn up.

But one of the worrying factors was the total silence from DAP, despite the fact that DAP was aware that something big was brewing.

Syed Saddiq would have liked to have told his friends in DAP about the plan but that would have been breaking Mahathir's confidence, and Saddiq had been sworn to secrecy.

Syed Saddiq appeared worried that the DAP would continue to fully support Anwar, and in that case, it would be thoroughly embarrassing for DAP to not support a motion of confidence for their own PM.<sup>9</sup>

Syed Saddiq knew it was going to be a rocky few months following the parliamentary session because, if Mahathir won, Anwar was not going to take this lying down and was almost certain to fight back. And it was unclear whose side DAP would take in that instance.

<sup>9</sup> Zoom interview with BERSATU leader 6, 10 Nov 2020.

And if Mahathir lost, it was unlikely that the ‘old man’ would accept the decision, and thus an even bigger battle would commence.

BERSATU Deputy President, Muhyiddin Yassin, who was supposedly trying to keep Mahathir in power, had created the new Pakatan/Perikatan Nasional coalition’s operations room in the Publika offices of former BN Minister Hamzah Zainuddin and from there, his kitchen cabinet along with Azmin, carried out backroom canvassing of support from Malaysian lawmakers on both sides of the aisle as PH1.0 coalition partners, DAP, and the pro-Anwar elements of PKR that were the bulk of the party became more and more isolated within their own government.

Tensions were running very high when the PH1.0 Presidential Council met late in the evening of 21 February 2020. In what could only be described as heated exchanges, Anwar’s supporters pushed for Mahathir to step down according to the original deadline of two years following the May 2018 general elections—GE14—while Mahathir’s supporters, led by Azmin Ali and Syed Saddiq, urged Mahathir not to agree to a timeline as he would then be a lame-duck Prime Minister.

In the end, Anwar and his supporters agreed that Mahathir would choose the date on which to resign after the APEC Meetings in Malaysia in November 2020.

Syed Saddiq allegedly told his team, ‘Tun has the numbers—from PAS and UMNO for a confidence motion to pass. But on the surface—in order to save Anwar’s face—at the meeting, the understanding was we can’t afford to have a lame-duck PM, so we must allow Tun to decide when and where to resign.’<sup>10</sup>

The following day, PAS announced that it was cancelling its move to table the motion of confidence as the PH1.0 Presidential

<sup>10</sup> Zoom interview with BERSATU leader 3, 15 Mar 2020.

Council had decided 'to leave it to the PH chairman to decide on when the succession to his prime ministership will take place'.<sup>11</sup>

At the meeting, there had been three options on the table, i.e., Mahathir handing over power in May 2020, after the APEC Summit, or at the end of his term as PM. But, in the end, everyone agreed to 'the middle ground of resigning after APEC in November'.<sup>12</sup>

However, this didn't necessarily mean that Mahathir would step down in November. Mahathir had said, 'I will step down after APEC that's scheduled in November,' and this could be interpreted in two ways—that he would step down in November after APEC, or that he would step down sometime after APEC.

Following the meeting, Anwar and the other PH1.0 leaders believed that Mahathir would do the right thing.

Speaking to the media, he said, 'Dr Mahathir should be given latitude because both of us and the Pakatan Harapan council have decided that the change would be smooth, peaceful and orderly, and we still continue to work as a team.'<sup>13</sup>

How wrong they were.

Because for months now, Mahathir had already begun accepting defectors from UMNO into BERSATU as part of the highly sensitive and secret Operation Hijrah, and his deputy Muhyiddin had courted parties like PAS with the intention of forming the Grand Malay Alliance—that had translated into the Pakatan/Perikatan Nasional or PN coalition.

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<sup>11</sup> Mahsinah Abdullah, Sharifah, 'Pas cancels move to table vote of confidence', 22 Feb 2020, *NST Online*, accessed at: <https://www.nst.com.my/news/politics/2020/02/568015/pas-cancels-move-table-vote-confidence>.

<sup>12</sup> Zoom interview with BERSATU leader 3

<sup>13</sup> Sivanandam, Hemananthani, 'Anwar: Don't pressure Dr Mahathir and me over power transition', *thestar.com*, 20 Feb 20, accessed at: <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2020/02/20/anwar-don039t-pressure-dr-mahathir-and-i-over-power-transition>.

But the demand for Mahathir to pick a date for the handover and now pinning it down to a specific point in time angered Muhyiddin's faction within BERSATU and the various other coalition parties in PN, causing Mahathir's allies to move up their Malay unity government game plan but with disastrous consequences for Mahathir.

Because, the irony was, after the 21 February meeting, Mahathir had finally decided in his mind that he would have to hand over power to Anwar.

But Mahathir didn't want Anwar.

While Azmin had always been his choice—after secretly defecting to Mahathir's side with his breakaway faction of MPs from PKR—to take over BERSATU and then become his successor as PM, Mahathir was now seriously disillusioned with him, following Azmin's lacklustre ability in reviving the economy and the sex scandal that had almost deep-sixed his career just months earlier.

And although Muhyiddin was effectively Mahathir's deputy and had been the individual building the PN coalition—that would see Anwar and DAP thrown out of power—Muhyiddin was willing to work with UMNO, and this was something Mahathir could not abide by. Moreover, since late 2019, Muhyiddin had also been campaigning to be Mahathir's replacement as prime minister and the nonagenarian felt that Muhyiddin was getting too ambitious.

So, by the end of the 21 February meeting, when Mahathir said he would be handing over power to Anwar, he had actually meant it.

Because, by then, Mahathir felt that he had no other option.

But it was too late.

The Frankenstein of his making was now on the loose, and although he tried, he could no longer control the movement.

Sunday, 23 February 2020, dawned on the politically charged capital, with the key parties of the new Grand Malay Alliance holding extraordinary meetings.

As the BERSATU Supreme Council met, UMNO and its Muafakat Nasional partner PAS met in Janda Baik, UMNO's Supreme Council met in Kuala Lumpur, as did GPS lawmakers. Azmin's splinter faction from PKR also met, with a 'dinner' for all the factions arranged at the fateful Sheraton hotel in Petaling Jaya for later that evening.

And the agenda for all these meetings was the plan to declare the formation of PN that day itself and the end of the PH1.0 Government.

The UMNO-PAS faction was keen on seeing a united Malay front while the rest of UMNO wanted to get rid of DAP, which they viewed as the key agitators behind the PH Government's vengeance against Najib, Zahid, and all other UMNO leaders. Muhyiddin and Azmin felt there was no choice but to throw out DAP and PKR immediately if Anwar was to be stopped. Now, Muhyiddin had the support of the various Malay parties, so all he needed was Mahathir's final approval. He thought that was going to be a mere rubberstamp.

But, given Mahathir's sudden change of mind, this approval was not going to come easily.

At the BERSATU Supreme Council meeting that morning, Mahathir was briefed that Anwar's faction was trying to meet with the King to convince him that Anwar commanded the majority of support of MPs and the King should call Anwar for an audience.

Muhyiddin then briefed Mahathir on their ability to formally create PN that day itself with the new coalition consisting of BERSATU, UMNO, PAS, a third of PKR's MPs, GPS, and Warisan. Together, they held 134 parliamentary seats and all these lawmakers had signed a statutory declaration to support Mahathir as PM and form PN, including Najib, who signed it with conditions.

Muhyiddin and several other leaders then urged Mahathir to pull BERSATU out of the PH1.0 coalition and for Mahathir to

# The Promise, Reality, and Collapse of New Malaysia's Pakatan Harapan 1.0 Government

Drawing on interviews with first-hand sources in and outside the administration, official minutes, and still classified documents, *Shattered Hopes* focuses on PH1.0's rocky twenty-two months in power to tell the story of how a fledgling government filled with so much promise and hope, was racked by internal power struggles and politicking even in its very first weeks in power, amid policy paralysis, racial politicking, and the ultimate unwillingness of veteran Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad to hand over power to his twice-anointed successor, Anwar Ibrahim.

In doing so, *Shattered Hopes* presents readers with a vivid blow by blow account of how broken promises, political patronage and trade-offs, economic dysfunction and racial polarization eventually became the defining characteristics of the promised New Malaysia.

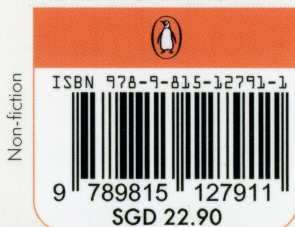
**'Required reading for anyone interested in Malaysia and its future.'**

—Mike Chinoy, Former CNN Senior Asia Correspondent

**'A fast-paced political thriller! By far, the most detailed account of the backstage manoeuvring, clashes and backstabbing that marked Dr Mahathir Mohamad's second attempt to shape the future of our country.'**

—Joceline Tan, Political Columnist, *The Star*

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