

From critic to menteri besar



A younger Azmin with Anwar (left) and Dr Mahathir. Azmin chose to stay with Anwar even when Dr Mahathir sacked him in September 1998.

Malay Mail 24/9/14 MSG.

SHAH ALAM — Azmin Ali, who became the 15th menteri besar of Selangor yesterday, is probably the most outspoken critic of Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim's administration, which he repeatedly described as weak and inefficient.

At one time, the 50-year-old Bukit Antarabangsa assemblyman had even made extreme proposal to sack Abdul Khalid from the post which he held since March 2008.

Azmin was also among the opposition leaders who strongly opposed the appointment of Khalid as Selangor menteri besar after the PAS-DAP-PKR pact managed to retain power in the state at the 13th gener-

the party on August 9.

Azmin will finally have the chance to prove that his criticisms against Abdul Khalid were true and that he can actually demonstrate a better leadership skill.

Born on August 25, 1964, in Singapore, Mohamed Azmin received his primary education at SK Jalan Gurney (2) Kuala Lumpur, secondary education at Setapak High School Kuala Lumpur before he pursued his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Mathematics and Economics at the University of Minnesota in the United States.

He is also the holder of a Master of Education in Mathematics and Economics degree from the College of Education and

war on September 2, 1998, following allegations of sodomy and corruption.

Anwar's sacking incident was also seen as the beginning of Azmin's hostilities against Dr Mahathir, to the extent of being the most outspoken critic of the former prime minister.

Azmin is also one of the founders of Parti Keadilan (now PKR), which was formed in 1999 to seek justice for Anwar.

In 2010, he became PKR vice-president for the term 2010/2013 and retained the seat for the term 2014/2017 in the recent party polls.

At the 10th general election in 1999, Azmin who represented PKR, won the state

al election.

The two PKR leaders have been seen to have irreconcilable differences, especially in matters concerning the administration of the state, as well as the party, and the hostility between them has also caused friction among party leaders and members.

The tension between Azmin and Khalid escalated when the former's name was dropped from the list of members of the Selangor State Development Corporation (PKNS) board of directors on December 4 last year, which he described as Abdul Khalid's attempt to reduce his influence.

The tension continued to persist when Khalid decided to run against Azmin in the contest for PKR deputy president's post during the party polls, but the contest ended when Abdul Khalid was expelled from

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Human Services Professions.

His early involvement in politics began around 1987 when former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad opened the door for him to help the then deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who was also the education minister.

Azmin, who previously served as a special officer in the Education Ministry, was Anwar's private secretary from October 1, 1987 to 1998.

His unquestionable loyalty to Anwar was demonstrated when he chose to stay with his boss even after Dr Mahathir sacked An-

war's seat of Hulu Kelang after defeating Barisan Nasional (BN) candidate Datuk Fuad Hassan with 1,146-vote majority.

At the 12th general election in 2008, he won the Gombak parliamentary seat by defeating

BN's Said Anuar Said Ahmad with 6,867-vote majority and the Bukit Antarabangsa state seat by defeating BN's Haslinda Mohd Zerain with 1,381-vote majority.

Azmin retained both seats in the 13th general election last year.

The controversial politician, however, had once been detained for seven days pending investigation on property ownership and faced several charges in court, including for taking part in the illegal rally during the Lunas by-election in 2012, and for participating in street demonstrations in the city. — Bernama