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Anwar's kin, friends, allies given big projects (HL)

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Some of the major projects awarded during Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's tenure as Finance Minister were to his close friends, allies and relatives.

These included several packages at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, independent power generating projects, hospital and medical facilities, highways and the dedicated rail link to the KLIA.

In a video recording aired by American business channel CNBC on Thursday, Anwar alleged that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's family had a lot of interest in the airport project.

While making allegations against Dr Mahathir, Anwar did not, however, discuss projects in which his friends and relatives have substantial interest.

He had also neglected to admit that as chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure and chairman of the Cabinet Committee on KLIA, he had a direct say in the contracts.

If any of the contracts was awarded to members of the Prime Minister's family, Anwar was himself involved in making the decision.

KLIA Bhd chairman Tan Sri Clifford Herbert could not be reached for comment but checks showed that a company linked to Anwar's close aide and chairman of his think-tank, Institut Kajian Dasar, Datuk Kamaruddin Jaafar, was given six KLIA main contract packages.

The company, Lankhorst Pancabumi Contractors Sdn Bhd, is a subsidiary of Lankhorst Bhd, of which Kamaruddin is executive chairman. Kamaruddin is currently being held under the Internal Security Act.

The six packages awarded to Lankhorst Pancabumi in KLIA were for the construction of the Bunga Raya VVIP terminal, landside fire station, police station, quarantine facilities, Fama building as well as grooving of runways.

Malaysian Resources Corporation Berhad, which until recently was under Anwar's control, was also given a number of contracts relating to the project.

A consortium involving MRCB, Adranz and Mudajaya Corporation was awarded the contract to build the track transit system at the airport.

In fact, Anwar repeatedly visited the project and openly expressed satisfaction with its progress.

On March 11, just months before the airport was officially opened, Anwar told reporters that the Cabinet Committee on KLIA was happy with the progress of the airport construction.

In the video recording, Anwar also referred to the Prime Minister's residence now being built in Putrajaya as "his official palace" claiming that he did not agree to its construction.

Anwar was again silent on the fact that the construction of Putrajaya as the new government administration centre was collectively agreed upon by the Cabinet of which he was a senior member until he was sacked on Sept 2.

He also ignored the fact that the question of the Prime Minister's official residence was discussed in Parliament on July 15 when Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Fauzi Abdul Rahman told the House that the house was the Prime Minister's official residence and not Dr Mahathir's private home.

"The residence, which is currently under construction, is a permanent feature as the Government does not intend to build a new residence for the

Prime Minister from time to time," Fauzi had said.

He had said the official residence cost RM16.7 million and not RM200 million as alleged by certain quarters. Fauzi had told the Dewan Rakyat then: "The planning has taken into consideration the status of the Prime Minister as the head of Government, hence reflecting the nation's sovereignty."

This, however, did not stop Anwar from telling the untruth when he told a gathering in Kuala Terengganu three days before his detention under the Internal Security Act that the house cost RM200 million.

Anwar's associates also have interests in several big projects such as the RM4 billion KL Sentral (MRCB), the RM3 billion to RM4 billion Express Rail Link (Penang Umno Youth chief Dr Abdul Rahim Ghouse) and the RM10 billion KL Linear City (Kamaruddin).

Others are the RM2.2 billion KL People Mover Rapid Transit (Kamaruddin), Sabah Shipyard Sdn Bhd (Kamaruddin), the RM4 billion Segari independent power producer, the biggest in the country so far, (MRCB and Malakoff), the RM700 million Port Dickson IPP (MRCB), the RM1.1 billion Ipoh-Lumut Expressway (MRCB), the RM120 million IPP Melawa in Sabah (Realmild Sdn Bhd) and Hospital Support Services (Realmild).

Anwar's father, Datuk Ibrahim Abdul Rahman, is chairman of Industrial Oxygen Incorporated Berhad, which has been awarded the Hospital Permai redevelopment project in Johor Baru.

In the video recording Anwar also questioned the deal between Konsortium Perkapalan Bhd and Malaysian International Shipping Corporation Bhd, despite having himself claimed that it was not a bail-out.

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