

## **'RM1.4bil not missing from contingency fund'**

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**by Hazlan Zakaria**

Deputy Finance Minister Awang Adek Hussin today refuted opposition claims that RM1.4 billion is missing from the nation's contingency fund, explaining that the exact amount for the year 2010 has already been replenished through a 2011 Supplementary Supply Bill.

Waving a copy of the Parliament Order Paper 3 2011 in his hand, he explained that the RM1.4 billion was replenished in the supplementary Supply Bill debated in parliament in March and April this year as stated in the document.

"Where were they during the debate? Ask Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim where he was in April and March this year. I was the one who tabled the Bill.

"Either they have forgotten, do not understand or it is an attempt to skew facts and mislead the rakyat," Awang Adek told reporters at a press conference in Parliament House today.

He said that the supplementary supply bill which was debated in the House accounted for and explained where all the money was used.

The federal minister further related that as per Article 103 of the Federal Constitution, the finance minister is allowed to utilise the contingency funds for unplanned expenses, which was what depleted the funds.

"But we will top it up, at the earliest possible opportunity. This year, we topped it up in the last parliamentary seating during March and April".

This, he stressed, is according to the procedures and guidelines as per the constitutional provision.

An 'outdated' issue

Awang Adek posited that the mistake may stem from a misreading or intentional skewing of a schedule in the Auditor-General's Report as read out by Azan Ismail (PKR-Indera Mahkota) in the Dewan Rakyat.

There is a column that reads "allocation" which is the total amount allocated for the contingency fund. That is RM1.5 billion. But several columns to the left is another column titled "current balance". This is the balance at the time, on Dec 31, 2010.

He said that financial records in Jan 1, 2011 gave the same amount of RM1.5 billion as it is the amount allocated for it.

"This is what Azan said is like magic".

But the real story is, the minister argued, the amount of the previous year is considered to be topped up and the new amount is for this year's contingency funding.

"I don't understand why they are bringing up this issue which has already been resolved, it is an outdated issue," concluded Awang Adek.

He was responding to opposition claims made yesterday, that RM1.4 billion was missing from the RM1.5 billion contingency fund.

The issue was raised by Azan in the Dewan Rakyat and followed up later with more questions from Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim during a press conference.

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