

**'Missing' funds: 'Awang Adek's answer confusing'**  
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**by Hazlan Zakaria**

Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim today rebutted the explanation given by the Finance Ministry that the "missing" RM1.4 billion contingency funds from last year was an "outdated issue" as it is topped up in a subsequent supplementary supply bill early this year.

"His answer creates more confusion. As per Standing Order 68(a) of the Dewan Rakyat with reference to constitutional provisions, if (a) Contingency Funds (bill) is tabled before the House, it must be tabled and decided upon, but cannot be debated," Anwar told reporters at a press conference in Parliament House today.

What was tabled and debated in Parliament in April and March this year, argued Anwar, was the supplementary budget bill and not the contingency funding.

"The deputy minister's answer contravened standing order 68, if it is contingency funding it is in another category, not like he said it (as being under a supplementary bill)," said Anwar.

The Permatang Pauh MP stated that the government should admit if there was a mistake and explain, not try to work out an answer and wiggle their way out of the matter by playing political games.

"I want to tell the minister, matters pertaining to the credibility of the Finance Ministry, that touch on the constitution and regulations and actual accounting matters should not be played up as political trickery," chided the former deputy prime minister.

He argued further that there could not be any difference between the major entries in the Auditor-General's Report and budget documents as the total must add up the same.

"It must be consistent, it must be the same. At that time it must show the same amount, as per constitutional provision."

'Amounts had never differed before'

Anwar continued that in Malaysia's financial history the amounts have never differed, this being the first time that the numbers differed despite the fact that there are supplementary supply bills year on year.

"The numbers cannot differ, they say it is spent (and topped up) later, later is later," he concluded.

Opposition Indera Mahkota MP Azan Ismail had earlier pointed out the discrepancy between the Auditor-General's Report and recent budget documents pertaining to the national Contingency Fund.

The balance was listed as RM79 million in the AG report, while the budget estimates show it to be at its full constitutionally mandated amount of RM1.5 billion.

Deputy Finance Minister Awang Adek Hussin (left), however, refuted the opposition's claims of the "missing" funds yesterday, saying that the funds were already tabled and debated in a supplementary budget bill earlier this year which topped up the RM1.4 billion.

The RM1.4 billion was "used up first" and tabled in Parliament at the earliest possible opportunity.