

## **PM: Govt firmly against graft, no Zahid ultimatum on Najib pardon**

**Malaysiakini**

**05 February 2024**

**Bernama**

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim today denied the government was not firm in addressing corruption following the Pardons Board's reduction of former prime minister Najib Abdul Razak's prison sentence and fine.

"The issue being raised here is that, allegedly, we are being lax on corruption issues. This is untrue," he said.

He also said Umno president Ahmad Zahid Hamidi never gave him an ultimatum regarding Najib's pardon.

"He (Najib) or his party has the right to have the prime minister and the Pardons Board consider it," Anwar said.

He was speaking during a gathering with staff of the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya today.

He said the government's stance against corruption is firm and comprehensive

and, despite brickbats, this stance will not be withdrawn.

“I have been attacked the most for directing all agencies to be firm in saving the country from the misconduct of leaders by investigating and recovering extraordinary wealth,” Anwar said.

The Tambun MP said civil servants must fully cooperate in combating corruption to save the country from various abuses of power and misappropriation of wealth to restore the people’s trust and the nation’s revenue.

“If we can save RM10-20 billion, it’s not for fixing the prime minister’s residence or his allowances.

“What we get, we return to the people, eradicate poverty, provide quality education, save children of all races, religions, and regions, so we no longer have to argue about small allocations,” he said.

Anwar acknowledged that the loss of revenue from crude oil and diesel leakages is still not fully under control, and there are still small groups at certain levels, including at the borders, ports, and tax departments, continuing corrupt activities.

### **Decisive enforcement action**

Anwar said the government's determination can be seen through the decisive actions taken by enforcement agencies, including the MACC and the Inland Revenue Board, in the fight against corruption and misappropriation.

"All of you were involved in the use of Spanco facilities, and my stance on Spanco has been firm since I became the finance minister.

"So, investigate, I don't know where the fault lies but I know the regulations are not right, I know it harms the country, I know it doesn't please civil servants but we were helpless, unable to do anything because there was no political will and determination to act," he said.

Since 1993, Spanco Sdn Bhd had been the sole company to hold the concession to supply and maintain government vehicles.

However, when the contract ended in 2019, an open tender was launched for the next contract award. Berjaya Group and Naza Sdn Bhd formed a consortium and obtained the contract through a letter of intent (LOI) that year. However, the LOI was terminated in 2020, and the tender was awarded to Spanco.

In July last year, Berjaya founder Vincent Tan filed a suit against the Finance Ministry and Spanco regarding the terminated LOI, alleging that the contract was awarded to Spanco even though the company's offered price was higher.

This prompted the MACC to open an investigation into the issue.

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Source: <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/695332>