

## **Defence procurements must be transparent, prudent – Anwar**

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**Bernama**

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim stressed that the procurement of national defence assets must be carried out transparently, prudently, and based on clear priorities and genuine needs.

He said that the sequence of priorities in any procurement should be determined by the actual requirements and expertise within the Malaysian Armed Forces, rather than by external agents or companies.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said previous approaches lacking in need-based planning and professional expertise had led to various issues, including major naval procurement scandals and project delays.

“This procurement system must be corrected. I am not the one deciding what should be bought; that is the armed forces’ expertise. But procurement priorities must be based on real needs and expertise, not dictated by agents, external companies, or politicians.

“This year’s allocation for the Defence Ministry is the highest ever, so everyone is responsible for ensuring that the spending is fully transparent, proper and accountable, because this is taxpayers’ money,” he said at the Wira Samudera breakfast event at the Royal Malaysian Navy’s Region 2 base in Sandakan today.

Also present were Sabah Chief Minister Hajiji Noor, Chief of Defence Force Nizam Jaffar, and Deputy Chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy, Vice Admiral Shamsuddin Ludin.

The prime minister said the misappropriation of funds must stop, and finances must be managed prudently.

He said that in matters of national security, there can be no compromise and defence assets must always be maintained at optimum readiness.

“We want the armed forces to be strong, with new ships and new aircraft. I mention this not for war, but to safeguard the country’s security. And for peacekeeping efforts, if there is tension, we can act immediately, such as in the Thailand-Cambodia issue, which demonstrated our military’s strategic acumen,” he said.

Anwar said the government will continue to elevate and honour the nation’s defence sector, including ensuring the welfare of defence personnel.

He said that since the Madani government took office, civil servants' salaries have been increased, with those in the implementing group receiving raises of up to 15 percent after nearly a decade without a salary review.

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