



# Breach of procedures

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BY JOSHUA PURUSHOTMAN  
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

**PUTRAJAYA:** At a press conference after chairing his maiden Cabinet meeting yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said serious lapses in government spending procedures were found in the alleged RM600 billion expenditure when Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin helmed the government as prime minister.

“From what I was informed (by Finance Ministry officials), there were several serious (breaches in procedure) involving a huge amount and a few projects.

“When approved, the markups were extremely high and went to specific parties. This resulted in them spending extravagantly (during the 15th general election),” he said.

However, the prime minister denied that there was any Cabinet discussion on forming a Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) to probe the matter.

“It (the RCI) was not raised in the Cabinet meeting. I will leave it to their (the Cabinet’s) discretion and (that of) the necessary departments to assess the matter,” he said when

➤ RM600bil spent on projects when Parliament suspended and during Emergency enforced had huge markups, went to specific parties: Anwar

responding to queries on the need for an RCI to probe the allegations.

Muhyiddin had previously claimed he had not misused funds meant to help the people and that if he did, investigations would have already begun.

Anwar also said he was more interested in focusing on good governance and economic recovery while leaving any probe into Muhyiddin to the authorities.

“Let me reiterate that I will not focus on such matters (as Muhyiddin) and only wish to ensure good governance and economic recovery,” he said.

Earlier yesterday, Muhyiddin said he was not afraid of being investigated over the matter.

He claimed he was confident because he knew he did not misappropriate funds belonging to the people that were entrusted to the government to

be used to help the public during difficult times, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sometime in November, former Malacca chief minister Adly Zahari raised questions on the RM600 billion allegedly spent by the Muhyiddin administration during the Covid-19 pandemic, and when Parliament was suspended and an Emergency was enforced.

Adly demanded that he (Muhyiddin) be investigated if the Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition formed the government after GE15.

The matter gained further traction when Sany Hamzan, Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah) election machinery chief and Hulu Langat MP, pushed for an RCI to be formed to probe the alleged spending of RM600 billion in “emergency funds”.

Sany also lodged a police report on Nov 30,

calling for a probe into the alleged misuse of funds between March 2020 and August 2021.

Amanah Youth vice-chief Ammar Atan followed suit and called for an RCI to probe the matter. He urged for the RCI to be formed expeditiously.

He said despite a statement issued by an aide to Muhyiddin defending the former prime minister, it failed to address any specifics and was merely “an empty denial”.

Soon, other voices were added to the call to probe Muhyiddin’s administration over the expenditure.

Umno supreme council member Isham Jalil said taxpayers deserved to know how Muhyiddin’s coalition, Perikatan Nasional, funded its GE15 campaign.

He said forming an RCI was vital as it was independent and could probe how extremely huge funds were spent since it was expended “during the Emergency period and Parliament was suspended at the time”.

However, Muhyiddin has consistently claimed the funds were spent to help the people during the pandemic, and that proper procedures and procurement policies were followed.