

RM7 billion flood mitigation allocation under review

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim ordered a review of RM7 billion worth of approvals under the RM15 billion flood mitigation project, done through direct negotiations instead of tender processes.

He said the government would not proceed with the allocation as approved, and would conduct a review to ensure transparency and that regulations are followed.

"This is not a small amount. (Although there are) reasons given such as expediting flood mitigation,

it becomes a problem when regulations are not observed and efforts are made to exploit the situation.

"This is highly regrettable and I am thankful that senior (finance) ministry officials are united and do not concur with this, but were (only) following instructions," Anwar, who is also finance minister, told a media conference following a briefing at the Finance Ministry yesterday.

Anwar added that he was briefed by senior ministry officials on

several issues to be prioritised in view of the Parliament sitting scheduled for Dec 19 and 20.

"There will be motions for the payment of emoluments as well as several urgent financial allocations. Otherwise, (civil servants') salaries cannot be paid in January.

"The (national) budget will be debated in Parliament next year after the King opens the session."

He said the unity government will focus on providing a fresh and positive climate to encourage investments, restore confidence

and drive the nation's economic growth.

On the line-up of economic advisers to be appointed to the team helmed by Petronas adviser Tan Sri Mohd Hassan Marican, Anwar said the matter is still being discussed.

"I will have to discuss with Mohd Hassan, in term of preference, parameters and priorities, and of course will consult with relevant senior officers in the Finance Ministry and the new Treasury secretary-general." - Bernama