



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim speaking at the 2023 Budget Dialogue at the Finance Ministry in Putrajaya yesterday. PIC BY AIZUDDIN SAAD

## TRUE WEALTH

# 'MORE TRANSPARENCY IN ASSET DISCLOSURES'

Past practice a 'farce', says PM, as he liaises with agencies, including MACC, for clear parameters

TEOH PEI YING  
AND FARAH DILLA  
PUTRAJAYA  
news@nst.com.my

**C**ALLING asset declarations in the past a "farce", Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said there was a need for more transparency in asset disclosures.

He said the parameters for asset declarations needed to be clear as there were cases where people did not declare their true wealth.

"The declaration of assets was a farce in the past because people had hundreds of millions of ringgit, but were still declaring RM10 (million) or RM11 million.

"I am discussing with various agencies, including the MACC (Malaysian Anti Corruption Commission), to make sure it is more transparent," he said after the 2023 Budget Dialogue.

He was responding to a question on whether his ministers had declared their assets to him and, if not, why and when they would.

Anwar said it was more important to be responsible and transparent in decision-making than to turn asset declarations into a political gimmick.

"I am appalled that people are not critical. They just accept at face value. When we look at the files, it is shocking. Most of the people don't tell the entire truth.

"People are satisfied, but it does not actually represent the real wealth of a particular person.

"Let us go (back) to the process to make sure that whatever decision is made is more responsible and transparent rather than making this a political gimmick."

PKR deputy president Rafizi Ramli last week said Anwar had yet to order his cabinet ministers to declare their assets.

On another matter, Anwar said it took him only two months in office to recognise that the government could save about RM10 billion from leakages in the procurement system.

He said the unity government's mandate remained the same changing the system to ensure

citizens benefit from economic initiatives and reforms.

He said a more professional procurement system was needed, one that did not have political interference nor took into account the interests of businesses.

Citing defence procurements as an example, Anwar said he had asked the Defence Ministry to come up with a procurement system for military assets that was more professional.

"Let the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF), Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) and army be responsible for sourcing for their material and equipment and negotiating with (foreign) governments without any political interference or taking into account the interests of businesses.

"In my experience, issues on floods and weapons, if you leave these to people who are capable, we can reduce it (wastage and leakages).

"What is the result (of the present system)? We suffer a high amount of leakages.

"(I have) not even been two months at the Finance Ministry and I have found RM3 billion, RM4 billion (up to RM10 billion) that could have been saved, (that were) leaked to certain parties."