

# PM: CONTINUE PROBE INTO LCS PROJECT

There will be a second round of prosecution involving RM9b scandal, says MACC

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said investigation into the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) project must continue because the earlier prosecution was not enough.

He said the shortcomings involving the project were huge and too many leakages were also discovered.

In fact, he said, the previous prosecution did not even involve the main culprits behind the LCS project issue.

"My instruction is that the investigation must continue, including on the LCS project, because I think the earlier action was not enough to uncover and find the real culprits in the case. So, let the investigation continue."

Anwar said this in reply to Ahmad Fadhli Shaari's (PN-Pasir Mas) supplementary question about governance issues during the Minister's Question Time at the Dewan Rakyat sitting yesterday.

Anwar said the instruction had also been forwarded to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) for further action and that the anti-graft agency had informed him that there would be a second-round of prosecution.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said the government had taken several steps to ensure good governance, including stopping all direct negotiations and instead managing them through tenders.

He acknowledged that there was indeed a need to allocate projects to Bumiputera contractors, but it also needed to go through a tender or limited tender process, in addition to having an adequate allocation for the needy.

It was previously reported that former Boustead Heavy Indus-



Former Boustead Heavy Industries Corp Bhd managing director Tan Sri Ahmad Ramli Mohd Nor (centre) was charged last year with three counts of criminal breach of trust involving the Littoral Combat Ship project. FILE PIC

tries Corp Bhd (BHIC) managing director Tan Sri Ahmad Ramli Mohd Nor was charged on Aug 16 last year with three counts of criminal breach of trust totalling RM21 million over the RM9 billion LCS project scandal.

The 78-year-old former Royal Malaysian Navy chief, however, pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Ramli, in his capacity as the then Boustead Naval Shipyard Sdn Bhd (BNS) managing director, was alleged to have approved payments of RM13,541,140; RM1,360,716; and, RM6,182,295 to three Singaporean companies without the BNS board of directors' approval.

Former Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairman Wong Kah Woh said the government's call for a continued probe into the LCS project will reaffirm its commitment to prevent leakages in the administration.

Speaking to the *New Straits Times*, Wong said the investigation papers on the project were still being reviewed by the MACC.

"The prime minister is right in reaffirming that the probe into the LCS project should continue.

"At the last PAC proceeding prior to the dissolution of Parliament, there were still investigation papers (being reviewed) by the MACC, which are still ongoing.

"Hence, Anwar's statement further reaffirms the government's commitment to let MACC have a free hand in all ongoing investigations (related to the project)."

On Feb 23, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reforms) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said said the investigation of the LCS project by MACC was ongoing to obtain statements from several parties, including those abroad.

Another former PAC chairman Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee, who is Beluran member of parliament, also agreed that there should be a thorough investigation into the LCS project.

He said a through probe must be conducted should there be any leakage involving other individuals related to the project.

"It has been discussed in the previous cabinet that whichever agency tasked to conduct an investigation must do a proper and thorough one," he said.

Previously, the PAC led by Wong in August last year had called on the cabinet to order further forensic audits to be carried out by BHIC on the LCS project that was awarded to BNS, following the release of the former's forensic audit report on the project.