



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim mingling with people at the Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house in Dataran Merdeka yesterday. PIC BY EIZAIRI SHAMSUDIN

POLITICAL WILL

PM ISSUES ORDERS TO PURSUE CULPRITS

Anwar wants action on EMIR report about country losing RM4.5 trillion in past 26 years

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has instructed law enforcement agencies, including the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and police, to investigate and track down those responsible for monetary losses incurred by the country due to corruption and leakages.

Responding to a report by EMIR Research, which highlighted the country's loss of RM4.5 trillion to corruption in the span of 26 years, Anwar said he had also instructed Bank Negara Malaysia and the Inland Revenue Board to probe into the matter.

Anwar, who had on numerous

occasions declared war on corruption, said the losses incurred by the country were "huge".

"I cannot confirm the amount. We are not too sure of that but it involves billions of ringgit.

"This is why I made a very serious decision despite various attacks and attempts, particularly from the rich.

"It doesn't matter if you are rich, as long as you are not corrupt with billions in assets, whether inside or outside the country, and hiding them.

"I have instructed the MACC, the (Inland) Revenue Board, Bank Negara Malaysia as well as the Commercial Crime Investigation Department to take action in accordance with the law," he said at a Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house in Dataran Merdeka here yesterday.

Present was Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar.

EMIR Research on Wednesday said its studies found that the country had lost about RM4.5 trillion to corruption and leakages from 1997 until this year.

Its president and chief executive officer Datuk Dr Rais

Hussin said rigorous modelling techniques were used to derive the losses — RM2.3 trillion. When investment multipliers are taken into account, the amount rises to RM4.5 trillion.

Anwar, who is finance minister, said the order to the authorities to carry out a probe into the matter demonstrated his administration's strong political will to eradicate corruption.

He also hoped that the decision would make the public heed the call to curb corruption alongside the government.

"Many people questioned why I always voiced such matters if it was only done to spread awareness.

"What is the meaning of the country and the power of the law if we ask the police or other enforcement bodies to take action, but leave those in power and have billions in assets?

"This is not a question about having a different race or religion, but rather, the question of having (good) character, morals and values.

"I hope that the people, no matter what your party is and no matter what race, will fully support this decision."