



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim checking out a shelf of books at Kuala Lumpur International Book Fair at World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

## GE15 GAMBLING FUNDS ALLEGATION

# 'I DON'T SAY THINGS WITHOUT BASIS'

**Anwar reaffirms stand, tells Muhyiddin to go ahead' with suit**

NOR AIN MOHAMED RADHI  
KUALA LUMPUR  
news@nst.com.my

**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has reiterated his stand that Perikatan Nasional (PN) had received funding from gambling companies for its 15th General Election (GE15) campaign.

Anwar said he has no issue if PN chairman Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin decided to proceed with legal action over his statement.

"Please read the statement (I made last year) carefully before taking any action.

"However, if he decides to proceed (with legal action), go ahead.

"I don't make such statements without any basis," he said when met after the launch of Kuala Lumpur International Book Fair at World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur, here, yesterday.

Asked if investigations into the matter are still ongoing, Anwar replied: "Let the agencies involved explain further."

At a press conference on May

20, Muhyiddin had demanded an apology from Anwar and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi over their accusations that PN had received funds from gambling companies for its GE15 campaign.

Muhyiddin, who is Pagoh member of parliament, described the allegations as "serious and defamatory" and said the coalition would consult its legal team about further action.

On Thursday, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said, in a parliamentary written reply, said the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission has yet to open an investigation file over Anwar's statement.

Anwar had previously implied that part of PN's election funds came from gambling companies involved in special draws.

Anwar was also asked the reason why the Finance Ministry established a special purpose vehicle (SPV) to take over the company responsible for the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) construction project — Boustead Naval Shipyard Sdn Bhd — as a subsidiary.

He replied that an official statement would be issued on the matter.

"A statement will be issued because there are ongoing projects that need to be completed, in-

cluding the LCS.

"We have no choice because we already spent RM6 billion and we must take over to complete the project."

On Friday, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan announced that the Finance Ministry had established the SPV to take over Boustead Naval Shipyard.

He said the LCS project would still be monitored by the Project Monitoring Committee that is jointly chaired by the Treasury secretary-general and the Defence Ministry secretary-general.

The controversy surrounding the RM9.128 billion contract — the largest single deal in the Defence Ministry's history — erupted due to significant delays in the project.

Six vessels of what is set to become the Maharaja Lela class LCS were ordered and five should have been delivered by last August, but not a single one was handed over.

More than RM6 billion had already been paid to BNSSB, a subsidiary of Boustead Holdings Bhd.

Investigations were launched against several people, but so far only one person has been charged.

In January, it was announced that the contract had been reviewed and the order reduced to five ships.