

'Anwar's asset declaration misused for slander'

KUALA LUMPUR: Data from Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's asset declaration to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) on March 7, 2019, has been misused by irresponsible parties, according to the prime minister's political secretary.

Datuk Ahmad Farhan Fauzi said this information was used to spread the baseless accusation that Anwar is "the 17th richest leader in the world", implying that his wealth was obtained illegally.

He said the asset declaration was part of the Pakatan Harapan government's initiative at the time to ensure transparency among cabinet members and members of parliament (MPs).

"This declaration did not raise any issues at the time because it was accompanied by a detailed explanation of how the assets were acquired. The majority of the asset value is based on current property estimates.

"These assets were acquired legally and can be proven through sales and purchase documents and legitimate financial records," he said in a statement.

He added that Anwar's asset declaration of RM10.7 million was not an issue, as many cabinet members and MPs had much higher asset values, including Datuk Dr R. Santhara Kumar (Segamat) with RM132.1 million and Datuk Ngeh Koo Ham

(Beruas) with RM77 million.

The others included then prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad with RM32.3 million, Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir (RM25.1 million), Datuk Seri Mohd Redzuan Md Yusof (Alor Gajah, RM23 million), Senator Datuk Raja Kamarul Bahrin Shah Raja Ahmad (RM15.3 million) and Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (RM14.3 million).

"The accusation that Anwar is the 17th richest leader in the world is absurd. Compared with other leaders in Malaysia, Anwar's asset value is not among the highest.

"Spreading these unfounded accusations is a classic example of defamation that can damage an individual's credibility."

He noted that spreading information without investigating its truth not only tarnished an individual's reputation but also eroded public trust in the political system and national institutions.

Farhan said political differences should be approached maturely.

"Personal attacks, especially

through defamation, are irresponsible actions that offer no benefit to the people.

"Criticism of leaders is allowed in a democracy, but it should focus on the policies introduced, not personal attacks or baseless accusations.

"For example, if there are those who disagree with the economic policies introduced by the prime minister, it should be discussed factually and academically, not by creating false narratives about his personal wealth."

He added that to develop the country, mature politics was an urgent necessity, and political party leaders must set a better example.

Farhan said Anwar was working to foster good relations with state governments, including those under opposition administration, as cooperation could provide better service to the people.

He said such efforts could be disrupted if elements of defamation and immature politics undermined unity, as cooperation between the federal and state governments required trust.

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DATUK AHMAD FARHAN FAUZI

Prime minister's political secretary

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