

'No threat to national security'

Anwar brings up previous govt's record as he slams critics

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia Airports Holding Bhd's (MAHB) privatisation deal will not threaten national security as its chairman and chief executive officer will still be Malaysian, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister slammed Perikatan Nasional for creating a "false narrative" over the takeover of MAHB by a consortium of Malaysian and foreign firms, which will own 70% and 30%, respectively.

"Who said that our security will be compromised?" Anwar said in the Dewan Rakyat here yesterday, adding that Malaysia would still own the airports under MAHB.

He said it was untrue that MAHB was being sold to a foreign company as alleged by some Perikatan activists.

He said negotiations were for Khazanah Nasional Bhd and the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) to acquire a 70% stake in MAHB.

The remaining 30% will be held by the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP), which is in talks to be sold to BlackRock, a US investment firm.

"This is different from the narrative created outside as though it involves the sale of MAHB. There is no sale of MAHB to a foreign company," he said.

He added that GIP had issued an official statement that BlackRock would not be involved in the management of the airports under MAHB.

"This exercise only involves the management of the airports with

BlackRock Inc's shareholdings in top 20 companies on Bursa Malaysia		
Company	BlackRock Inc. shareholdings as at May 24, 2024 (%)	Market value (RM)
1. MAYBANK	2.03	2,444,396,000
2. PBBANK	2.69	2,164,393,000
3. TENAGA	1.36	1,037,658,000
4. CIMB	2.11	1,555,975,000
5. PCHEM	0.94	520,721,000
6. IHH	0.99	544,573,000
7. CDB	1.05	498,467,000
8. PMETAL	1.68	744,006,000
9. HLBANK	1.12	472,276,000
10. YTL	0.89	362,538,000
11. YTLPOWR	0.78	316,436,000
12. MISC	0.89	334,307,000
13. PETGAS	1.19	433,215,000
14. SIMEPLT	0.89	266,282,000
15. NESTLE	1.62	483,140,000
16. MAXIS	1.29	373,621,000
17. AXIATA	1.18	308,425,000
18. TM	0.97	240,456,000
19. IOICORP	1.19	295,425,000
20. KLK	1.16	281,363,000

Source: Bloomberg TheStar graphics

the airports remaining the property of the Malaysian government," he added.

Anwar then pointed out that Perikatan had also worked with BlackRock when the coalition was in power between 2020 to 2022.

"They forget that there was an important decision to give BlackRock an important investment on Feb 26, 2021.

"(Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin) was then prime minister, and

with former ministers (who are now in the Opposition), decided to hand over the management of the EPF's separate managed account and syariah private equity fund worth about RM2.5bil to BlackRock to manage," he said.

"At the time I did not politicise it."

Anwar also said his administration has been stem in its stand against having direct trade with Israeli companies.

"Our stand against Israeli companies is the sternest in our government's history.

"Only the Madani government decided to stop all direct trade with Israeli companies, including (Israel-based shipping company) Zim, which was still using our ports last year," he added.

Anwar questioned why such actions were not taken by previous administrations as Zim had been operating since 2002.

BlackRock, he said, is one of the world's largest asset fund managers and has interests worth RM20.5bil in the local stock market.

These include equity in Tenaga Nasional Bhd, Telekom Malaysia Bhd and PETRONAS, including some RM7bil belonging to the government and corporate sectors.

He said that it was not realistic for the government to call off all deals with companies that invest in Israel.

"This includes Apple, Microsoft and Nvidia. They all have interests in Israel, do we have to cancel (our trade)?"

"It might sound good, people will be happy to hear and call us fighters, but this is not realistic. In my discussions with Hamas, this issue did not even arise," he said.

"This seems more Hamas than Hamas," he said, drawing chuckles from the government bloc in the House.