

# PM denies private funds used for recent trips

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has clarified that the government did not use private funds for the Malaysian delegation's trips to four countries recently.

"There is no conflict of interest," he said in a Facebook post.

Anwar said that for the four trips, the government chartered a Malaysia Airlines flight, for which it paid RM1.6 million.

Had Putrajaya used the govern-

ment's executive jet, it would have cost RM2.5 million.

As the chartered flight had more space than required, representatives of private companies participating in the trips were invited to join the flight.

"These companies paid for their seats," Anwar said, adding that this had cost the companies RM4.5 million.

The cost to the government remained at RM1.6 million, he said.

"I repeat, the government did not use private funds," said Anwar.

On Friday, unity government spokesman Fahmi Fadzil clarified that the government was the one that bore the cost of the prime minister's flights.

He said the government spent RM1.662 million, or 27 per cent of the total flight expenses for Anwar and his delegates, whereas the business delegation on the same flight covered the remain-

ing 73 per cent, amounting to RM4.5 million.

During the Prime Minister's Question Time in the Dewan Rakyat last week, Anwar stated that part of the costs were also borne by private companies involved in the meetings abroad.

He said this approach was one of the measures introduced under his administration to ensure efficient management of expenses for official overseas trips.

"We did things differently as I noticed that travel costs were often quite high," he said.

Several groups had questioned Anwar's statements, with Muda asking how the firms were selected and whether there were any benefits for these companies.

On the other hand, Bersatu Youth called for Anwar to be investigated, alleging that he could have flouted the law, including Section 165 of the Penal Code.