

2020–2024 PERIOD

# Defence spending up by RM2b amid uncertainties

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia has increased defence procurement and development spending by RM2 billion, from RM3 billion in 2020 to RM5 billion in 2024, amid geopolitical uncertainties, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

“The Philippines and the United States have increased their military preparedness in southern Philippines, near Sabah. I contacted President (Ferdinand) Marcos (Jr) and he said this was in response to China’s actions,” he said during Prime Minister’s Question Time in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

“This is worrying and compels us to strengthen our readiness in Pulau Banggi and Sabah to safeguard our resilience.”

He was responding to a question by Ahmad Fadhli Shaari (PN-Pasir Mas) about defence preparedness in facing global and regional geopolitical uncertainties.

Anwar said as the Defence Ministry had faced decades of controversies and scandals involving procurements, the government adopted government-to-government (G2G) negotiations.

Apart from foreign deals, he said, the local defence industry was also important,

“We have spent tens of billions of ringgit, but local capacity re-

mains very limited.

“That is why, for example, we have provided additional allocations for preparations, including in Lumut, as well as other local activities and the procurement of fast interceptor craft for the Royal Malaysian Navy, which involve significant local contributions.

“Through G2G negotiations with Turkiye, costs were reduced immediately because we eliminated the excessively high agent commissions. The procurement process also became more efficient.”

He said drones from Turkiye would arrive in December, while two sets of surface-to-surface missile launchers — the Enver Strike Missile system from Norway — would arrive this month.

For the navy’s littoral combat ship project, 48 surface-to-surface missiles were 86 per cent complete and set for delivery this year.

“I emphasise 2025 because this project has dragged on for years, with endless studies. But now, the management is more organised.

“From South Korea, we have requested enhanced government-level cooperation.

“Delivery of the Fighter Lead-In Trainer/Light Combat Aircraft for the Royal Malaysian Air Force will begin in October 2026 for the first unit, with the final unit delivered in August 2027.”