

DEFENCE ASSETS PROCUREMENT

PM: REDUCE RELIANCE ON ARMS AGENTS

Govt-to-govt deals boost transparency, reduce burden of agent commissions, says Anwar

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim wants an end to excessive reliance on agents in the procurement of defence assets, calling instead for more government-to-government (G2G) negotiations.

He said since 2022, the government decided that procurement must be more transparent, either through open tenders or, in some cases, direct G2G arrangements, to reduce the excessive commissions to multiple agents.

He said this approach had proven effective, citing the G2G arrangement with Turkiye, where

costs were reduced significantly.

“We must end the overreliance on agents and, wherever possible, opt for G2G arrangements, carefully negotiating and verifying costs, without mixing in political considerations or (the interests) of certain individuals.

“In negotiations with Italy, I spoke with them to accelerate a G2G arrangement. Under such agreements, both governments are responsible and costs are much lower,” he told the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

He was responding to a question by Ahmad Fadhli Shaari (PN-Pasir Mas) on defence readiness amid global and regional geopolitical uncertainties.

Anwar said the government would not proceed with any defence procurement, including Black Hawk helicopters or fighter jets, unless the Royal Malaysian Air Force technical committee could guarantee operational readiness.

He said the government would not sign any contract if it could not be assured of the assets’ serviceability.

“They will be fully responsible

for its operational readiness, and if that cannot be guaranteed, we will not sign. That is clear.”

Earlier yesterday, Armed Forces chief General Tan Sri Mohd Nizam Jaffar confirmed that the purchase of four Black Hawk helicopters worth about RM187 million had been cancelled.

This came after His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, King of Malaysia ordered the ministry to scrap the plan to buy the 30-year-old helicopters.

On the state of Malaysia’s naval assets, Anwar revealed that the country was still displaying ships from as far back as 1976.

“I went to Langkawi to see the ships. It’s true.

“Even a ship from 1976 was brought in because we have no other ships. Imagine how I felt, spending billions of ringgit, yet we have no ships.

“In 1976, I was still resting in Kamunting. That ship is still being used.”

He was responding to a question by Datuk Seri Dr Shahidan Kassim (PN-Arau) about the number of ships in service that were more than 30 years old.