

Anwar: Local defence industry has our support

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SEREMBAN: The government will continue supporting the local defence industry but is demanding greater transparency in procurement, says the Prime Minister.

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said past practices, where inflated costs arose from corruption and middlemen's involvement, could no longer continue.

"We are going to spend significantly to strengthen our air, land and maritime defence capabilities, particularly in the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea.

"We will back local expertise, such as in the production of armoured vehicles, but we need to have greater transparency since we do not have a track record we can be proud of," Anwar said when opening Mildef International Technologies Sdn Bhd's new plant here yesterday.



Boost for defence: Anwar opening Mildef's new plant in Seremban. Also present were Negri Sembilan Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun (second from left), Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin (second from right) and Mohd Nizam (centre). - Bernama

He noted that a lack of transparency had long allowed corruption and excessive commissions.

Despite heavy investment, he said Malaysia had been "weak" in defence procurement.

"As we all know, the LCS (Littoral Combat Ship) case, where ships never materialised, has been a joke for years," he added.

He stressed that procurement must involve full cooperation

from military leadership and technical experts to prevent abuses.

He cited the recent arrests of 10 people, including five senior Armed Forces officers, linked to a smuggling syndicate, as a reminder of ongoing risks.

Anwar also revealed that after learning the navy lacked sufficient patrol vessels to secure oil rigs, he personally spoke with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"I asked if Turkiye had ships ready, and Erdogan said yes. The good news is, we will begin receiving them this year and next. Costs are lower under this government-to-government deal," he said, adding that under such arrangements, the buyer could also set extra conditions such as technology transfer and training.

Malaysia, he added, would increasingly use government-to-government arrangements for defence purchases wherever possible.

"We need to do this as we will be increasing our spending on defence.

"This is important as we want to ensure our armed forces, police and other enforcement agencies are ever ready to face challenges," he said.

Meanwhile, Mildef International Technologies managing director Datuk Seri Mohd Nizam Mohd Kasa said the company, established 20 years ago, was now supported by 30 local vendors.

"We started small and faced many challenges. Today, we have proven that locally-made defence products can meet international standards.

"This plant is part of a long-term strategy to reduce reliance on foreign products and technology, in line with the Defence Ministry's white paper on self-reliance," he said.

The plant can produce up to 80 armoured vehicles and related products annually.