

ENSURING CREDIBLE FINDINGS

'RUSSIA WANTS UNBIASED MH17 PROBE'

Moscow cannot work with bodies it believes are not independent, says Anwar

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Russia was ready to cooperate with a thorough and independent investigation into the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17.

Speaking to the media after his meeting with Grand Mufti Sheikh Ravil Gaynutdin on Wednesday, Anwar said he had raised the MH17 issue during his bilateral discussions with President Vladimir Putin earlier.

"President Putin listened attentively and extended his sympathies and condolences to the families of the victims.

"He emphasised that Russia had maintained this stance."

Anwar said Putin stressed the importance of a comprehensive and unbiased investigation.

"He reiterated Russia's commitment to supporting a meticulous and impartial inquiry and expressed willingness to provide full cooperation to ensure the credibility of the findings."

The prime minister said Putin denied claims that Russia was reluctant to cooperate in a probe into the downing of the airliner and

said Russia was prepared to engage with investigative bodies it deemed impartial.

"He made it clear that any assertions about Russia's unwillingness to cooperate are unfounded.

"However, he stressed that Russia could not collaborate with entities it perceived as lacking independence."

Anwar was the first national leader to meet Putin following the release of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) report on MH17.

ICAO recently concluded that Russia was responsible for the 2014 downing of Flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine. All 298 people on board the aircraft, which was en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, died.

ICAO determined that Russia violated the Chicago Convention, which prohibits the use of weapons against civilian aircraft.

Anwar said he would convey Putin's statements to the families of the victims, ensuring transparency and accountability in addressing this tragic incident.

The meeting with Putin followed a separate bilateral session earlier in the day with Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, where both sides discussed expanding trade cooperation.