

Anwar issues no-go order

Questionable army and police procurement temporarily frozen

KUALA LUMPUR: All Malaysian Armed Forces and police procurement decisions linked to corruption are temporarily shelved, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said the government, through the relevant ministries, will review and restructure all procurement processes to ensure transparency within the existing system.

"I thank Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin for his very clear statement on this matter.

"We take this seriously, and I will await reports on any loopholes or weaknesses in the current procurement system so that we can review it to ensure full compliance," said Anwar to the media that included Bernama after performing Friday prayers at the Usamah Bin Zaid Mosque in Wangsa Maju here yesterday.

The Defence Ministry was previously reported to be planning a major overhaul of its anti-corruption plan this year, including a comprehensive review of tender and procurement processes in line with best governance practices.

The move aims to curb leakages, irregularities and abuse of power that could undermine the credibility of national defence institutions.

On Jan 7, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) arrested a former Army chief and his two wives over an army procurement project, and seized assets worth RM11.4mil following raids on a residence in Kuala Lumpur and another in Besut, Terengganu.

Elaborating, Anwar said MACC's firm and comprehensive action will ensure the public does not bear negative consequences, including risks to the country's economic progress.

He stressed that, alongside the MACC, the government has also given full latitude to the Inland



One for the memories: Anwar signing a jersey before presenting it to children from the TFFC football team at a restaurant in Kuala Lumpur. - Bernama

Revenue Board to act in safeguarding national interests, stressing that the success of such efforts requires strong political will and broad public cooperation.

The Prime Minister said as a matter of policy, the government does not interfere in investigations, but he also expressed deep concern over developments in corruption cases that demand firm and comprehensive action.

Anwar emphasised that public understanding of anti-corruption efforts must be strengthened, noting that despite enforcement action, some quarters continue to downplay the seriousness of corruption.

"There are voices that defend such actions, even in Parliament. When action is taken against former ministers with billions in wealth, objections are sometimes raised and challenges made.

"Such a destructive and corrosive culture must be corrected immediately," he said.

Anwar also said legal action taken in relation to the weaknesses in the implementation of

certain projects should not lead to negative perceptions of ministries involved or the security forces.

The Prime Minister stressed that such firm action is taken only against a small number of officers found to be involved in corruption cases, and the overall integrity of the ministries or agencies should not be called into question.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said that while the implementation of physical development projects in previous years had generally been strong, the government is aware that several ministries failed to fully meet project implementation targets last year, as shared by Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar on Thursday.

"Like corruption cases, they involve only a small minority. I want my colleagues in the security forces, the military and the police to know that, overall, they are credible, capable and have made great sacrifices.

"The same goes for ministries. Calls to improve performance do

not mean total failure. It's just that appropriate action must be taken against the officers involved so that the implementation of projects can be expedited, especially small projects that bring direct benefits to the people," Anwar said.

Shamsul Azri said 14 ministry secretaries-general will be summoned to explain why their ministries failed to meet project development targets last year.

Without naming the ministries involved, he said expenditure on development projects by the ministries concerned stood at 87.91%, which is below the national average, and warrants serious attention.

According to Shamsul Azri, projects such as the construction and upgrading of roads, schools, clinics and hospitals continued, but implementation had been slow.