

Zahid Wants To Discuss Defence Issues With Opposition Leaders
Bernama
December 29 , 2011

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 29 (Bernama) - Defence Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has invited opposition leaders to meet to discuss defence issues so that the people are not presented with the wrong facts.

He said this was to ensure that the people don't have negative perception of national defence issues.

"Opposition leaders should provide proof before making accusations. What gave them the impression that the price of LCS has increased?," he asked after opening the Islamic Dakwah Foundation Malaysia (Yadim) Carnival at Dataran Coliseum, Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman here today.

Zahid said this in response to allegations by Petaling Jaya Utara Member of Parliament, Tony Pua that the LCS price has increased several fold since Boustead Naval Shipyard (BNS) was awarded contract to build six LCS.

Parti Kesejahteraan Insan Tanah Air (KITA) president Datuk Zaid Ibrahim also made similar allegations found taken from local defence blogs.

The opposition should not make assumptions because the LCS (Littoral Combat Ship) project has not been officially awarded to BNS, a company owned by the Malaysian Armed Forces Fund Board.

He said BNS was given a letter of intent by the Defence Ministry to build six LCS but it was different from a letter of offer adding the high price was because it would be built locally.

"The price includes value added such as offset programmes, transfer of technology, and moreover, it does not include the price of sub-systems for each LCS,."

Zahid was also asked to comment on the plan by opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to hold a roadshow to explain the sexual misconduct case against him.

"I think issues being handled by courts need not be politicised. Don't make the judiciary a polemic and let the court make the decision.

"We should not drag the people in court cases eventhough the decision is unfavorable to us. Don't forget that politicians are policymakers and have to respect laws before asking others to respect them."

He said Anwar should not use democracy to protest as it was unsuitable for Malaysia and let people be the judge during elections.

Zahid also announced that the Malaysian Armed Forces (ATM) will contribute the Quran to Muslims in Cambodia who are in dire need of the holy book.

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