

Anwar: Wrong for Supply Bill to prop up crisis fund
The Malaysian Insider
November 10, 2011
By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 10 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim insisted today the government cannot use a supplementary Supply Bill to approve the RM1.5 billion contingency fund as it breached Parliament's Standing Orders.

The opposition leader said on Tuesday that RM1.4 billion was missing from the Treasury's contingency fund for unforeseen expenses, as the Auditor-General had found just RM79.15 million in the pool even though the Government Expenditure Estimates reported an allocation of RM1.5 billion.

Anwar told reporters today that Standing Order 68 said contingency funds must be "authorised and decided upon without debate."

But Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Awang Adek Hussin said yesterday a supplementary Supply Bill "was tabled and debated" in late March this year detailing all unplanned expenses which had depleted the fund.

The senator added the contingency fund was a rolling account that was topped up by RM1.5 billion every year upon ratification of the supplementary Supply Bill.

Today, Anwar said despite the expenses being accounted for in March, the Auditor-General had noted the missing RM1.4 billion in the contingency fund in February.

"There was a discrepancy at that given time. Even if the money was spent, it should be noted down. But there is no explanation. This is the first time it has happened," the Permatang Pauh MP said.

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