

**MOF TO BEGIN TALKS ON RETURN OF ASSETS TO TH – PM ANWAR
YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 29 — The government will begin discussions on the handing back of Lembaga Tabung Haji (TH) assets which were transferred to a special purpose vehicle (SPV) owned by the Ministry of Finance (MOF) in 2018, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said this consideration was made after preliminary reports showed that TH was now well managed and that there was increasing confidence among depositors amidst the efficient management of the new leadership of the national haj management institution, who had shown their integrity.

“After studying developments and discussing with the (religious affairs) minister and TH board chairman Tan Sri Azman Mokhtar, I have said from the beginning that once TH is properly managed, MOF will start discussions on the return of all assets held by the SPV.

“This will also disprove the utterly irresponsible slander hurled against the then Finance Minister (Lim Guan Eng) and former government for allegedly transferring them (assets) to a non-Islamic group. No, I have seen the records and they are still held by MOF, and I’m holding them in trust,” he said.

He said this in his speech when launching TH’s 60th anniversary celebration at Menara TH here today. Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na’im Mokhtar was also present.

In 2019, then Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa said the move to transfer the assets totalling RM19.9 billion to the SPV had successfully 'closed holes' due to the disparity between the assets and liabilities left by the previous administration.

Anwar said as long as he was given the mandate to manage the country, he would not compromise on any attempts to damage national agencies or state-owned companies by those out to make profits.

"That is why I don't mind to be criticised on this matter of (emphasising) governance. As long as I have the mandate, I will not compromise and will ensure that the country is managed properly to thwart attempts to damage these agencies by certain people seeking to fulfil their excesses and greed.

"And I have given an assurance that once it is rectified, we will hand back all (assets) but the government cannot bear the losses due to this negligence. We can see in the case of TH that with good governance it could recover quickly. Alhamdulillah, that is why I want to congratulate the TH management," he added.

Anwar also said the government would amend the TH Act to fulfil the meaning of Maqasid Syariah, not only in the aspect of efficient management but also to provide for a better appreciation of haj management.

At a press conference later, the prime minister said the discussions would involve the return of all assets held by the SPV and that the handing over would be done in stages.

"This decision (return of assets) itself can refute all the slander made in the past years regarding the alleged sale of these assets," he said.

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