

COMMENTARY

What Happen to CAT?

By Mohd Khairul Ramli

Malaysians deserve a government that prioritizes Competency, Accountability, and Transparency (CAT). Recent developments surrounding the RM190 million¹ contract awarded to Heitech Padu Bhd for the maintenance of the Road Transport Department's (JPJ) MySikap website raise serious questions about the integrity of the process.

Recent news that Farhash Wafa Salvador Rizal Mubarak, a former associate of Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, divested his significant stake in Heitech Padu does not erase the concerns surrounding the timing of the contract award². This sudden investment fuels concerns of political connections appear to influence multi-million-ringgit deals. Was it a lucky coincidence? The awarding process and potential connections should be open and transparent. This ensures decisions are based solely on merit and serve the best interests of Malaysians.

While Transport Minister Anthony Loke insists the RM190 million contract to Heitech Padu was awarded through a fair and open tender process based on the lowest bid, the timing of the official acceptance letter raises serious questions. Issued a full month after a former key aide to the Prime Minister, became a major shareholder in Heitech Padu, this delay sparks suspicion. This attempt overshadows the transparency of the process and fuels accusations of cronyism, where political connections trump genuine competition.

While national security matters rightly demand secrecy, a public contract for a government agency like the Road Transport Department shouldn't be hidden behind a veil. This lack of transparency fuels public suspicion of a potential backroom deal, where details are concealed to avoid scrutiny. Shouldn't the public have the right to

¹ <https://themalaysianreserve.com/2024/04/17/heitech-padu-bhds-rm54-32-million-contract-extension-for-vital-services-says-loke/>

² <https://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2024/04/19/farhash-no-more-heitechs-substantial-shareholder>

know how their tax money are being allocated, especially when awarded to a company with a recent, high-profile shareholder acquisition by a former political insider?

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's commitment to a transparent and accountable administration is now facing intense scrutiny, presenting a critical juncture for him to uphold his promises. Failure to meet this expectation could fuel scepticism and discontent among Malaysians, casting doubts on the government's integrity and Anwar's leadership credentials and Malaysians won't accept anything less.

INSAP believes the Heitech Padu case serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of CAT in government. Transparency is not just a principle; it's a cornerstone of public trust. A thorough investigation, coupled with a commitment to open communication, is necessary to regain public confidence and ensure that Malaysians receive the government they deserve.