

Felda debt issue: My 'tok guru' dad taught me not to lie - Muhyiddin

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Perikatan Nasional chairperson Muhyiddin Yassin is standing his ground in the Felda settlers' debt waiver issue and said he would face Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in court.

"He now sued me and said I was lying. Let us go to court and hope the court will give a fair judgment.

"I just want to stress that I'm not in the wrong. But this prime minister named Anwar is stupid - he does not know what debt is, and what sukuk is.

"Anwar, that is a bond. It is not the same with the Felda settlers' debt waiver. But he does not want to admit his mistake," the former prime minister told a ceramah in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, last night.

Muhyiddin and Anwar are embroiled in a war of words over who should be credited for the RM8.3 billion debt waiver for Felda settlers.

Muhyiddin argued it was an initiative under his administration, but Anwar countered that it only materialised this year because he arranged the funds to resolve Felda's debt woes.

Muhyiddin further argued that the two matters were unrelated, prompting Anwar to furnish two documents which he claimed showed otherwise - a Financial Service Reserve Account (FSRA) agreement and a sukuk issuance letter.

In addition, Muhyiddin also alleged that Anwar does not understand the documents he signs, and therefore, was incompetent to remain as prime minister.

'I don't lie'

Yesterday, Anwar issued a letter of demand to Muhyiddin, seeking an apology within 24 hours in regard to the matter.

In the letter, Anwar sought an apology from Muhyiddin, to be run in newspapers and media of Anwar's choice, a retraction of Muhyiddin's letter of demand to Anwar as well as the allegedly defamatory statements against the premier.

The premier also demanded the Pagoh MP pay substantive compensation of RM200 million over aggravated damages and legal costs.

Commenting on Anwar's demands, Muhyiddin reiterated that the former cannot differentiate between debt waiver and sukuk.

"When we were in the government, we waived their (Felda settlers') debt worth RM8.3 billion. There was no need to pay (the debt) anymore, it was wiped off the record books.

"This was done in 2021. I checked with my Felda settler friends and they said that their debts have been settled. But the prime minister says I'm lying, and that I'm all talk. Who's lying?

"I don't lie. My dad was a 'tok guru' (cleric) and he always taught me not to lie. Of course, I'm not lying, I have the evidence to prove it. So, when he (Anwar) says I'm wrong, he's defaming me, so I can sue him," said Muhyiddin.

Felda recently clarified that the assignment for the FSRA agreement was meant, among others, to enable the agency to restructure its financial commitment in relation to the interest rate charged and write off 80 percent of the settlers' bad debt amounting to RM8.3 billion.

In a statement, the agency said the commitment to write off the settlers' debts was implemented by the agency without any grant from the federal government in 2021 and 2022, hence giving a huge impact on Felda's cash flow and

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