

Najib spared 'wang eshan' explanation
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has been spared from explaining his use of the term 'compassionate payment' as opposed to 'oil royalty' when describing the cash payments by Petronas to Kelantan.

Deputy speaker Wan Junaidi Abdul Rahman said the premier's description of 'compassionate payment' was not in conflict with the federal government's stand on the matter.

As such, the deputy speaker contended that there is no question of the PM having misled Parliament.

Salahuddin Ayub (PAS-Kubang Kerian) brought up the Kelantan oil royalty issue under Standing Orders 37(1) and 36(12) on March 22.

The situation was in contrast to that of Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim (PKR-Permatang Pauh), who was ordered to explain his remarks on Apco-1Malaysia-One Israel link in Parliament yesterday.

However, the deputy speaker said there is no bias or disparity between the two cases, because as far as he can ascertain, Anwar's explanation was voluntary.

NONE" There was no compulsion from the speaker or the House during the proceedings to order Permatang Pauh (Anwar) to explain.

"I can't comment on what went between Anwar and my colleague (Ronald Kiandee) in chambers, but it was understood that the outcome was that he (Anwar) had conceded to explain his remark yesterday."

A decision will be made next week as to whether the explanation is accepted, failing which Anwar could be referred to the powerful parliamentary rights and privileges committee. He is liable to be suspended if found to have breached parliamentary conduct.

'Use proper channels'

Anwar, who was in the House, then pointed out that BN representatives seem to be given a lot of leeway over it comes to misusing the Standing Orders.

"I am not trying to make accusations, but to state the facts," he said.

Salahuddin Ayub 01 Salahuddin protested the deputy speaker's decision, but Wan Juanidi refused to entertain any objections.

He said anyone with grievances should use the proper channels - for example, by moving a motion if he or she deems it necessary.

Kelantan has long demanded that the federal government should pay the oil royalty, based on the agreement signed by Petronas.

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