

AG told to review Batu Puteh issue via talks with S'pore

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim wants the claim over Pulau Batu Puteh (Pedra Branca) to be reviewed through immediate and more "meaningful" negotiations with Singapore without jeopardising bilateral relations.

"I have asked the Attorney-General (Tan Sri Idrus Harun) for an explanation on the controversial Batu Puteh claim, which as it stands has been awarded to Singapore by the ICJ (International Court of Justice) and also any other arising implications.

"I asked that (the matter) be looked into so that there can be more meaningful negotiations with Singapore," he told a media conference after chairing the Cabinet meeting yesterday.

On Oct 13, former prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said in a statement the Cabinet had agreed for Malaysia to proceed with legal action at the ICJ on the dispute involving sovereignty over Pulau Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks and South Ledge.

Ismail Sabri said the matter

was agreed upon after hearing the presentation and proposals by a special task force to review laws relating to sovereignty over the disputed islets on Oct 7.

Separately, Anwar said the Cabinet meeting yesterday also discussed several other pending matters, including the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) reports on issues faced by Tabung Haji.

He said the chairman of the RCI, former chief justice Tun Md Raus Sharif, had given a briefing and discussions would continue in January on the issues

concerned, as well as proposals on how to improve the management of the Islamic financial institution.

The RCI was set up early this year in accordance with the Commission of Inquiry Act 1950 to investigate management and operation issues faced by Tabung Haji.

It was formed to enable further investigations on arising issues and for recommendations to be submitted to the government to restore the image and confidence of the people in Tabung Haji. - Bernama