

PM: KEDAH MB FACES SEDITION PROBE

Sanusi must respect Malaysia agreement as enshrined in the Constitution, Anwar tells Dewan Rakyat

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POLICE have launched an investigation into Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor's claim that Penang is under Kedah's ownership, the prime minister told the Dewan Rakyat. Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who described the statements issued by Sanusi as irresponsible, said he had gotten documents related to the claim, including a police report. "The police have started investigations based on several provisions in the law to take appropriate action to hinder the continuation of statements that clash with the principles of the

Constitution and the law.

"Why was this raised? Yes, it is because of the coming state elections. Why want to be so ravenous (*gelojoh*) for the state elections that we sacrifice the principles of the Constitution and cause chaos?"

"The investigations are being carried out, including under the Penal Code and Sedition Act. Part of the report has been submitted to the attorney-general and is awaiting action," he said in a reply to a question from Lim Guan Eng (PH-Bagan) during the ministerial question time.

Lim had asked the prime minister on the action against Sanusi for calling for a Constitutional amendment so that Penang would be returned to Kedah.

Anwar went on to explain that the position of Penang as a state within Malaysia that was separate from Kedah had been clearly stated under Clause (2) Article 1 of the Federal Constitution.

It provides that the federal states consist of the states of Malaya, which are Johor, Kedah, Kelantan, Melaka, Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Perak, Perlis, Penang, Selangor, Terengganu, as well as the Borneo states of



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim fielding questions in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

Sabah and Sarawak.

"Clause (3) Article 71 of the Federal Constitution, read with the Eighth Schedule of the Federal Constitution, has guaranteed the position of the state constitution, including Penang.

"The existing provisions of the Federal Constitution are the result of agreements between the British colonial government and the Malay Rulers to form the federation, which was the Federation of Malaya Agreements dated Jan 21, 1948 (1948 Agreement) and Aug 5, 1957.

"Penang is a sovereign state in Malaysia and its position is always guaranteed and has been provided for in the Federal Constitution, which is the main law of the federation," he said.

Anwar emphasised that he did not want to prolong the issue, which had become a debate of sorts and was leaving it to the attorney-general to take appropriate action.

"We have gained independence

for six decades and there were parties that ruled, but never was this (issue) raised other than by an irresponsible leader who is willing to breach the Constitution.

"I do not wish to comment further on this issue. It is not a norm for me to stoop so low in the political arena," he said.

Anwar added that attempts to unravel Sanusi's claims would be detrimental as Malaysia had become an independent and sovereign country.

Late last month, Sanusi claimed that Penang was under the ownership of Kedah, and that only Perak and Perlis had a border with the state.

"I'm waiting for confirmation from the Department of Survey and Mapping Malaysia. From what I know, Penang is Kedah's.

"There is no such thing as the Kedah-Penang border. Our state border ends near the island there (Balik Pulau). How can it (Kedah-Penang border) be measured? Which gazette should we use?"

Sanusi was quoted as saying.

In response, Penang chief minister Chow Kon Yeow said he would take legal action against Sanusi, and the latter replied that he was prepared to go to court over his claims.

Anwar had also asked Sanusi, who is the Pas election director, to respect the agreement on the formation of Malaysia as enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

In **George Town**, Penang police chief Datuk Khaw Kok Chin said four reports had been lodged over Sanusi's claims.

"Yes, I can confirm that four reports have been made against the Kedah menteri besar. The case is being probed under Section 505(b) of the Penal Code (for intent to incite) and the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998," he said.

The offence carries a maximum penalty of a fine and two years' jail. **Additional reporting by Audrey Dermawan**