

# 'WE WON'T SACRIFICE AN INCH'

Malaysia did not compromise as maritime treaties with Indonesia was on points agreed to by both, says Anwar

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**P** RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has told the Dewan Rakyat that the country's sovereignty will continue to be protected following the signing of instruments with Indonesian President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) related to maritime borders recently.

He said the question of "being compromised" in signing the treaties did not arise as it only involved the ones agreed to by both parties and those under dispute, such as Pulau Sebatik in Sabah. He added that further discussions would be held on the latter.

"Jokowi represented the Indonesian people, and I represented Malaysians. The question of sovereignty will not be compromised or sacrificed.

"During negotiations, we agreed to move ahead and solve the ones both countries have agreed on. The ones we could not agree on, we put them on hold. But it should not affect our bilateral relations.

"Our ultimate position is that not an inch of our country will be



Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir and his Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi showing the instruments related to maritime borders signed between Malaysia and Indonesia recently. With them are Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Indonesian President Joko Widodo. BERNAMA PIC

sacrificed," he said during the Prime Minister's Question Time in Parliament yesterday.

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DATUK SERI ANWAR  
IBRAHIM  
prime minister

He was answering a supplementary question by Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (Bersatu-Pagoh) on whether the government could ensure that the claims by Malaysia would not be compromised.

Earlier, Anwar answered a question from Datuk Seri Takiyuddin Hassan (Pas-Kota Baru) on the government's assurance that the newly signed border settlement between Malaysia and Indonesia would not affect sovereign rights or harm the country, especially the negative impact on maritime economic activities in the long run.

Anwar said Malaysia had signed two treaties involving the matter — Straits of Malacca Treaty and Laut Sulawesi Treaty.

He said that the two treaties were signed based on the choice of the best border points that could be reached jointly and followed international laws, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982), and also precedent cases that international courts and international tribunals had decided.

He said the treaties would provide clarity in terms of sovereignty and jurisdiction that would allow both countries to carry out law enforcement activities in their respective maritime areas more effectively, including cross-border crime prevention activities such as goods smuggling and human trafficking.

"Economic and development activities such as fishing, exploration and tapping of marine resources can also be done in a more orderly and secure manner with the maritime borders that

have been finalised.

"The signing of these treaties is expected to further increase the confidence for both parties to continue negotiating maritime demarcation restrictions that have not been resolved for mutual benefit," he said.

Takiyuddin argued that the government had signed the treaties without considering the views of maritime experts, which Anwar denied.

He said the issue had been closely viewed by multiple agencies, including the Maritime Affairs Department from the Foreign Ministry, the Attorney-General's Chambers (A-GC), the Survey and Mapping Department of Malaysia, and the National Hydrographic Centre.

"Who are the experts? Name them. Do not simply mention," the prime minister said.

Malaysia and Indonesia recently discussed a range of bilateral issues, which later witnessed the signing of six instruments. Additional reporting by Qistina Sallehuddin