

# Sulu issue to be left to relevant authorities to handle, says PM

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The issue over the so-called Sulu heirs and their counsel's false claims against the Malaysian government will be left to the relevant authorities to handle, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"Let others answer it," the Prime Minister said when met by reporters after launching the D'Anjung Selera Madani food court here yesterday.

He was asked to comment on a letter of demand dated May 28, 2023 sent by Paul H. Cohen, coun-

sel for the so-called Sulu heirs, to the Attorney General.

The letter demanded payment before June 2 to settle the controversial "final award" by a French arbitration court.

The purported final award amounted to US\$16.412bil (RM75.13bil, including 10% interest) together with US\$3,502,394.24 (RM16.02mil) in counsel and expert fees, and US\$4,026,592.64 (RM18.4mil) in arbitration costs.

The letter alleged, among others, that the government purpose-

ly failed to comply with the purported final award and made outrageous assertions concerning the purported Spanish arbitrator Gonzalo Stampa and his actions.

In a statement yesterday, the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC) said it had responded to the letter on May 31, and lodged a police report on June 1 against Cohen for his "unfair statement and allegations made against the Attorney General".

The AGC said the government will continue to take all necessary

action to put an end to the claims and to ensure Malaysia's interests, sovereign immunity and sovereignty are protected at all times.

On June 29, 2021, the High Court of Justice of Madrid (HCJM) annulled the judicial appointment of Stampa to act as an arbitrator.

In February 2023, the Spanish Constitutional Court threw out an appeal by the self-proclaimed heirs of the defunct Sulu Sultanate to reinstate Stampa as an arbitrator. Stampa was the arbitrator for a 2019 case in the HCJM without

Malaysia being involved in the case.

As a result of this decision, HJCM retroactively invalidated Stampa's appointment and nullified all his actions as a purported arbitrator, including the alleged "preliminary award" he had rendered in Madrid.

Stampa then moved his seat of arbitration to Paris in February 2022, where he made the "final award" of US\$14.92bil (with 10% interest to accrue) against Malaysia.