

PM vows to defend sovereignty

Malaysia will fight 'Sulu heirs' claims in any international court

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia is awaiting another important decision related to the Sulu claimants case, which is expected to be delivered by a Dutch court on June 27, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (pic).

The Prime Minister said the country would continue to defend its sovereignty in all related jurisdictions, including the Netherlands, France, Luxembourg.

"Therefore, the government is waiting for another important decision in the Dutch Court of Appeal related to the applicant's claim to recognise and enforce the Final Award in the Netherlands," Anwar said during a special briefing on the Sulu claimants case in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Malaysia had also submitted its argument that the purported Sulu heirs' application for recog-



inition and enforcement of an arbitral award of US\$14.9bil (RM62.59bil) in February last year was null and void.

Malaysia had also successfully set aside the Paris Arbitration Court's purported award of US\$14.94bil to the self-claimed heirs of the defunct Sulu Sultanate on June 6.

Calling it a landmark decision,

Anwar said the ruling was "final and binding".

Although the French arbitration court's decision was in favour of Malaysia, Anwar said the government had received information that the claimants would continue seeking recognition of the Final Award in other countries.

Anwar said this was an abuse, along with a breach of the mechanisms and processes of arbitration and courts.

He also reiterated that the controversial Spanish arbitrator Gonzalo Stampa did not have the power to issue any final awards as his appointment had been rescinded by the Spanish courts on June 29, 2021.

Stampa had moved his seat of arbitration to Paris in February 2022, where he made the award against Malaysia.

Stampa is also facing criminal action for going against a Madrid court decision to annul the case.

It was reported earlier this month that authorities in Madrid

probed Stampa in February over his decision to continue hearing the Sulu arbitration even after his appointment was rescinded by the Spanish courts.

Malaysia, Anwar said, will continue to object to any third-party litigation funders who continue to support the Sulu heirs' claims.

He said the government will not hesitate to take legal action against those who jeopardise national security by supporting, colluding with, or helping the claimants, whether directly or indirectly.

Meanwhile, Anwar said there was no evidence suggesting the involvement of the Philippines in the Sulu claimants case.

"I met President Marcos (Ferdinand Marcos Jr) twice. Of course we are offended (by the claimants), but it does not involve the Filipino government," he added.

He noted bilateral ties between the two countries are good and Sabah's status would not be affected.

Anwar was responding to Ketereh MP Datuk Khair Mohd Nor who said he believed the Philippine government was involved in the matter and the Lahad Duta incursion in 2013.

Anwar said the government will not entertain any claims, be it by the Sulu claimants or the Philippines, as Sabah is Malaysia's "sacred" territory.

He said the Sulu claimants had no locus standi to lay claim on Sabah and that it was strange for countries where the Sulu claimant had filed arbitration proceedings to allowed such claims.

"Another country cannot use their judiciary to question the sovereignty of any country which has already been recognised," he said.

"We are forced to use all our might to respond in Madrid, in Paris, in Luxembourg because if we don't reply or are slow in our responses, the decision will affect our interest overseas," he added.