

Govt mulls separation of public prosecutor, A-G roles

KUALA LUMPUR: The government is mulling the proposal to separate the public prosecutor's office from the Attorney-General's Chambers (A-GC).

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the separation of powers, however, was not the government's main priority in ensuring the A-GC's prosecution process was more transparent and independent.

"The proposal is being studied. It is a bit complicated and time-consuming.

"In principle, many have agreed to separate the entities. However, the financial implications at the

implementation stage need to be considered as, in this case, it will involve an additional RM300 million," he said during the prime minister's question time in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Anwar said this in response to a supplementary question from Chiew Choon Man (PH-Miri) on the government's plan to separate the public prosecutor's office from the A-GC to steer clear from any political prosecution allegations on any politicians.

Previously, Minister in Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reforms) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said had held a

meeting with A-GC representatives, led by Solicitor-General Datuk Ahmad Terrudin Salleh, to discuss the separation of powers between the attorney-general and public prosecutor.

Following the discussion, she said the A-GC would prepare a document on the restructuring plans.

At the same time, several parties, including the Malaysian Bar, had also called on the government to separate the public prosecutor's office and the A-GC to ensure greater transparency in the country's justice system.

On another matter, Anwar said

any prosecution of any individual reported in the Pandora Papers and Panama Papers was under the A-GC's jurisdiction.

"There is information on the actions being taken before (by the previous administration). However, I have taken a comprehensive approach since I took over the role.

"Hence, it is up to the discretion of the police or the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission to refer to the A-GC on anyone linked to any case.

"They will decide on the prosecution and they should answer on this, not the prime minister."