

RULING FOR NON-MUSLIMS

Govt to present proposal to rulers on use of 'Allah'

KUALA LUMPUR: The government will present a proposal on the use of the word "Allah" to the Conference of Rulers in July.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the government was steadfast in prohibiting the use of the word "Allah" for non-Muslims in the peninsula, but would allow it to be used by non-Muslims in Sabah and Sarawak with conditions.

"There are differences in opinion, but some agree that it (the use of the word "Allah") can be allowed for non-Muslims (in gen-

eral). But they personal views," he said in reply to a question by Datuk Idris Ahmad (Perikatan Nasional-Bagan Serai) in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Anwar said the issue revolved around two contradictory directives issued by the cabinet and the Home Ministry in 1986.

He said the Attorney-General's Chambers had studied Jill Ireland's case, particularly the administrative directives, before the decision to withdraw the appeal in the High Court was made.

"Yes, we could have proceeded

with the appeal, but the same issue would arise again due to the contradictory directives."

He refuted allegations that the Conference of Rulers was not consulted prior to the government's decision to withdraw the appeal.

He said the cabinet decided on Feb 7 to uphold the rulers' decision to ban non-Muslims in the peninsula from using the word "Allah" and impose conditional use for those in Sabah and Sarawak.

"Hence, the A-GC's decision not to appeal (the High Court ruling) is in line with the ruler's wishes."