



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim with (from left) Yemen's Dar al-Mustafa founder and chancellor Habib Umar Hafidz, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari and former Egypt grand mufti Professor Dr Ali Jum'ah in Shah Alam yesterday. PIC BY HAZREEN MOHAMAD

TURATH ISLAMI SELANGOR FESTIVAL

PM URGES MUSLIM SCHOLARS TO BE VOCAL

Provide advice on religious matters, including govt policies, says PM

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Muslim scholars in the country should be vocal in providing advice on religious matters, including those concerning government policies.

Citing the controversy surrounding the use of the word "Allah", Anwar said while people had differing views, the government would always follow the advice of muftis and adhere to the decision of the Malay rulers.

"I have my personal opinion on it. However, we must follow the decision of our muftis and rulers.

"(The issue) can be debated (by scholars), but (better to do it) behind closed doors, so as not to confuse the people," he said in his speech at the Turath Islami Selangor festival here yesterday.

Anwar said scholars should be sincere when expressing their views.

"Insyallah, we will listen. There are some (views) that we agree with, but sometimes we have our own restrictions.

"Also, the ummah's understanding on (religious issues) may differ."

Anwar, however, assured participants that the government was on the right track in uplifting the dignity of the ummah, in line with the country's Madani approach.

In instilling good values, including *ihsan* (benevolence), Anwar said the government, via the Islamic Development Department Malaysia and the Education Ministry, would be responsible for distributing "The Forty Hadith of Imam Nawawi" among school students.

He also stressed the importance of spreading knowledge with love and the right methods to ensure that the teachings of Muslim scholars were well understood.

On the water woes in Kelantan and Sabah, Anwar said he was expected to attend a meeting next week to find solutions to the issue.

He said he would meet Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Ahmad Yakob and Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor, as well as representatives from the Finance Ministry and Natural Resources,

Environment and Climate Change Ministry.

"I'm looking at my schedule and will be discussing the matter further with Kelantan menteri besar and Sabah chief minister, along with their teams."

Anwar had, during The Unity Government National Convention recently, announced that the federal government would initiate plans to resolve the water supply woes in Sabah and Kelantan.

On the recent seizure of Swatch timepieces with rainbow colours, which is often associated with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, the prime minister said he would leave it to the Home Ministry to provide an explanation.

He said he had yet to receive details on the matter.

"Let the Home Ministry explain themselves. It is not an issue of the colours displayed on the watch, but the LGBT wording. I'm sorry, but I haven't seen the details."

It was reported that Swatch boutiques in Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, 1 Utama Shopping Centre, Sunway Pyramid Shopping Mall, Setia City Mall, Mid Valley Megamall, Mid Valley Southkey, Sunway Putra Mall, Sogo KL, Queensbay Mall, Fahrenheit 88 and Suria Sabah Shopping Mall were raided on May 13 and 14.