

Stakeholders to act against those behind casino claim, says Anwar

NEW STRAITS TIMES 27 APR 2024 Pg-5

SEPANG: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said relevant stakeholders will take action over a report which alleged that the government is mulling a casino licence for Forest City in Johor.

On whether the government would take action on the issue, Anwar replied: "They will take the necessary action."

He was speaking after Friday prayers at Malaysia Airlines Bhd's Pusat Muktamar Islam here yesterday.

On Thursday, Anwar denied reports that the government was mulling issuing a casino licence to revive Forest City in Johor.

A Bloomberg report on Thursday claimed that Malaysia was in early discussions with tycoons on opening a casino in Forest City, in

an effort to revive the RM478.35 billion property project.

Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi rubbished claims of plans for a casino in the state.

He said such rumours could affect the state's reputation as well as unity and harmony among the people.

He said the state government had never received any invitation to discuss such plans, much less be involved in such matters.

"The Johor government wishes to stress that no casinos will be opened or operating in the state.



Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi

"As stated before, the state government is confident that Forest City will be given a new breath of life with the creation of the Special Financial and Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zones.

"Everyone is aware that the state government, with the support of the federal government, is actively working towards

spurring Johor's economy to have a positive impact such as readying quality, high skill jobs for its people.

"As such, such rumours can be seen as possessing elements of

sabotage and ill-intent, damaging the images of Forest City and Johor."

Onn Hafiz said based on Johor's history, three casinos had been closed down in the state from the reign of Almarhum Sultan Sir Ibrahim.

"His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, the King of Malaysia, had decreed that he would not allow any casino to open in the state. This demonstrates Johor's clear stand on the issue," he said.

Berjaya Corp Bhd (BCorp) yesterday also denied allegations that its founder, Tan Sri Vincent Tan, was involved in discussions regarding a casino licence in Forest City.

BCorp said the reports from The Edge Singapore and

Bloomberg had included "inaccurate information that misrepresented its supposed involvement in discussions with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim regarding the project".

"We would like to make it clear that (Tan Sri Vincent) Tan has not participated in such discussions and refute inaccurate claims presented in the articles.

"In response to these inaccuracies, we kindly request the following actions from the concerned parties: clarification and removal of any misleading content from the articles in question across all platforms.

"We trust that the responsible parties will understand our concerns and take appropriate action."