

ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS

Govt willing to discuss extra funds for Sabah, says Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR: The federal government is open to discussing additional allocations for Sabah, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said the reported RM6.6 billion allocation for the state this year comprised only development expenditure (DE).

He said the amount did not include operating expenditure (OE) and funding for other projects, such as the Pan Borneo Highway.

Of the total RM16 billion allocated for Sabah, RM7.9 billion was for OE and the remaining

RM1.4 billion for expenditures other than OE and DE.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, was responding to Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia vice-president and Beluran member of parliament Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee's recent statement that the state's 40 per cent revenue rights could not be brushed away under the federal government's expenditures for the state.

"What is it that you don't understand, the operation, development or overall expenditures?

"I've already explained the overall allocation of RM16 billion (for Sabah)," Anwar said at the Tanglin food court where he stopped by for lunch before Friday prayers.

He also rebuked Kiandee, who had previously held a ministerial position and was a former deputy speaker of the Dewan Rakyat

Anwar said Bersatu failed to address some issues involving the state, including the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63), when it was in power.

"If there is a need for more al-

location, we can discuss it, but don't politicise the matter. Where were you when the MA63 was discussed?

"Now that the Sabah state election is drawing near, you (Kiandee) wish to become a champion.

"Don't resort to petty politics and raising sentiments when you were quiet and only followed (directives) when you were in power."

He said the government was implementing as many projects as possible, including in energy, education and health sectors,

while looking to increase allocations.

Anwar previously said RM16 billion in federal allocation to Sabah could be more than the 40 per cent net revenue that the state was entitled to.

He said the federal government earned RM10.2 billion from the state last year.

In addition to the mandatory allocations for Sabah under Article 109 of the Federal Constitution, a 40 per cent allocation must also be given to the state as provided for by Article 112C.