

Batu Puteh handled treacherously'

Previous govt should not have surrendered any inch, says PM

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PUTRAJAYA: Elements of treason have been found by the Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) in its report on the handling of sovereignty issues involving Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks and South Ledge, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar said the previous government should have not given up any inch of land as it is considered as a major form of treachery against the country.

"The RCI revealed weaknesses and, from a certain angle, treachery was committed because we should have fought till the end for every inch of land.

"This is not a light matter, whereby any offence in relation to surrendering our sovereignty

is deemed a major treason.

"But the legal process must be respected and we will follow that," said Anwar to reporters after performing Friday prayers here yesterday.

The RCI on the handling of sovereignty issues involving Batu Puteh, Middle Rocks, and South Ledge has proposed that a criminal investigation be brought against former premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

As of yesterday, Dr Mahathir has, not commented on the RCI report.

In a highly redacted and declassified report tabled on MP's desks



Meeting the people: Anwar greeting the public during lunchtime at Precinct 15 in Putrajaya.
— Bernama

in Parliament on Thursday, the RCI report recommended investigations over offences of cheating under Sections 415(b), 417, and 418 of the Penal Code, that resulted in the loss of Batu Puteh.

It also recommended that the RCI secretary lodge a police report to initiate the probe.

The RCI report will be tabled and debated in the Dewan Rakyat meeting next week.

In February, the government announced that His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, King of Malaysia, had consented to the establishment of the RCI.

The issue stems from a decision made by the government in 2018 to withdraw Malaysia's application to review the International Court of Justice's decision on the sovereignty of Batu Puteh.

At the time, the government

was led by Dr Mahathir.

In 2008, the ICJ ruled that Batu Puteh belonged to Singapore while Middle Rocks was awarded to Malaysia.

It also ruled that the ownership of South Ledge should be determined based on the delimitation of territorial waters, with sovereignty over South Ledge belonging to the state in the territorial waters of which it is located.