

Anwar: We'll leave it to the authority of the King

KUALA LUMPUR: The matter concerning an addendum to the pardon order for Datuk Seri Najib Razak was raised briefly during an audience with His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, the King of Malaysia, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said the matter was discussed briefly with Sultan Ibrahim in Johor Baru on Monday as His Majesty wanted to know the latest development.

"Since this matter continues to be raised, I have submitted it for the consideration of the current Yang di-Pertuan Agong, at a time when it is deemed appropriate by the King, to refer the matter to the Pardons Board, which will be chaired by His Majesty.

"So, we leave it to the authority of the King, firstly, to bring it to the meeting of the Pardons Board and to consider it thoroughly," he said in reply to a supplementary question from Pekan MP Datuk

Seri Sh Mohmed Puzi Sh Ali during the Prime Minister's Question Time in Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Sh Mohmed Puzi had asked the Prime Minister whether he would request a royal audience with the Sultan of Pahang to resolve the matter.

The addendum to the pardon order will supposedly allow the former prime minister to serve the remainder of his jail sentence under house arrest in the case involving SRC International Sdn Bhd.

Yesterday, Anwar criticised Kota Baru MP Datuk Seri Takiyuddin Hassan for seeking political mileage on the issue.

Under the law, Anwar said he had no right to provide any explanation on the issue as it involves the King and the Pardons Board.

"Even if I want to answer, I cannot do so to respect the courts.

"As a lawyer, does he (Kota Baru MP) understand the law?"

Anwar asked.

Takiyuddin had asked Anwar to confirm the existence of the royal addendum.

Anwar also pointed out that the hearing of the appeal in the Court of Appeal for Najib's case regarding the royal addendum had been scheduled for next month.

"Is it fair for us to comment before the ruling? The answer is no, as Standing Order 23(l)(g) of the Dewan Rakyat prohibits it.

"Therefore, as stated by the Attorney General (AG), we should respect and place trust in the legal institutions," said Anwar.

On Dec 9, the AG's Chambers advised all parties to refrain from making statements that are sub

judice and prejudicial relating to Najib's appeal over the purported addendum on his pardon order.

In a statement, the AG's Chambers noted that the Court of Appeal has fixed Jan 6 to hear Najib's application to adduce further evidence, and another application over the failure to gain leave for his judicial review over the purported addendum.

Anwar also revealed that he was the one who had brought Najib's case to the attention of the Pardons Board in a meeting on Dec 8, 2023.

Back then, the issue of the addendum had not yet arisen, he said.

"Initially, it was not included in the agenda.

"At that time, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong did not include the application for Najib's pardon for consideration of the Pardons Board.

"However, for the record, I pre-

sented it to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong then on the basis that every citizen or prisoner has the right to apply, and given Najib's position, it was reasonable for it to be considered," said Anwar.

"The Yang di-Pertuan Agong at the time gave consent.

"So, there were 11 items on the agenda; 10 were submitted by the Legal Affairs Division through the usual process, while on the 11th item, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, who chaired the meeting, directed me to present arguments regarding Najib's pardon's appeal.

"For the record, this was documented and minuted.

"In my view, regardless of whether we agree with the court's decision or someone's right to appeal, we cannot deny the right to be heard by the Pardons Board," said Anwar.

He also said that his involvement on the matter was limited to that meeting on Dec 8, 2023.