



PM urged to lift ban on biography of Sabah leader

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KOTA KINABALU: The Prime Minister has been urged to lift the ban on a biography of Sabah's late Kadazandusun leader Datuk Peter Joinod Mojuntin which has been in place for more than 40 years.

Peter J. Mojuntin: The Golden Son of the Kadazan was banned under the now-abolished Internal Security Act in 1978, the year the book was published, for touching on issues deemed a threat to the Federal Government back then.

In a lengthy open letter to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Mojuntin's granddaughter Atalia Mae Albert Jaua implored him to lift the ban on the book written by Bernard Sta Maria on the former state minister of local government and housing.

Mojuntin was among 11 people, including then chief minister Tun Fuad Stephens and other state leaders, who were killed on a short flight from Labuan when

their aircraft crashed in Sembulan waters while approaching the Kota Kinabalu International Airport on June 6, 1976.

The incident later came to be known as the "Double Six".

Jaua said the biography was written with the intention of telling Mojuntin's journey in fighting for the independence of Sabah (then North Borneo) and safeguarding the rights of the state and its people.

She feels that the book was banned because of its criticism of the Federal Government's policies and attitude towards Sabah at that time.

"The ban on the book was not lifted even after the ISA was abolished and now the ban is under Section 32(2)(a) of the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (Sosma)," Jaua wrote.

She said this issue highlighted freedom of speech and transparent governance, adding that Anwar "should know more about this, being a freedom and corruption fighter himself, and a vocal

critic on issues of inconsistencies and discrimination".

"Show and prove to us that it is true when you once said, 'Anak Melayu, Anak Cina, Anak India, Anak Kadazan, Anak Iban; semua anak saya', because Mojuntin was a Kadazan who passed too soon at the age of 37," she wrote.

Jaua added that it was absurd to continue to ban a book that is currently available for free on the Internet.

She said banning the book could also create the perception of censorship and governmental overreach.

"With profound respect for your (Anwar's) leadership and commitment to fostering unity and transparency, I earnestly urge Datuk Seri to reconsider the ban on *Peter J. Mojuntin: The Golden Son of the Kadazan*," Jaua wrote.

"This book, she said, stood not only as a tribute to her late grandfather's legacy but also an important narrative of Sabah's history and its struggle for justice and equity in the Federation.