



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim officiating at the closing of the state-level Kaamatan celebration in Penampang yesterday, PIC BY MOHD ADAM ARININ

REVENUE CLAIM NOT IGNORED

'GOVT HAS GIVEN SABAH MORE THAN IT SEEKS'

Annual allocation of RM16 billion may be more than 40 per cent sought by state govt, says PM

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THE RM16 billion annual federal allocation to Sabah may be more than the 40 per cent net revenue that the state is seeking, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said since he became prime minister, the allocation for Sabah was RM12.9 billion annually.

"In 2024, the allocation was increased to RM16 billion, which is far better. We have yet to give up on the 40 per cent net revenue entitlement sought by the Sabah government, but we know the RM16 billion provided to the state far exceeds the 40 per cent.

"We need to look at the overall picture and the Malaysia Agreement 1963. We need to be united and be understanding. Programmes need to be implemented in stages," he said at the closing of the state-level Kaamatan celebration at the Hong Koisaan hall at the Kadazandusun Cultural Association (KDCA) here yesterday.

Present were Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor, his deputy and organising chairman Datuk Dr Jeffery Kitingan and KDCA president Tan Sri Joseph Pairin Kitingan.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said sometimes, unity government members of parliament

"acted like Pas and Bersatu lawmakers".

He said while he did not mind criticism, some lawmakers acted as if the federal government did not care about or had sidelined Sabah and Sarawak.

He gave an assurance that Hajiji was aware of the federal government's intentions and that its priority was to resolve people's problems such as electricity, water supply, roads and schools.

Anwar said July had been set as the deadline to eradicate hardcore poverty in Sabah.

He said the federal and state governments should prioritise basic needs and infrastructure development issues.

"My priority is to eradicate poverty as it is more serious in Sabah compared with Penang or Selangor. It takes a longer time to resolve this.

"People cannot afford to buy school uniforms, food or milk for their children. It is the responsibility of the federal government and the state to eradicate hardcore poverty. Affected households have fallen from 20,000 to 9,000.

"I thank the state government for its full cooperation as we work to eradicate hardcore poverty by July this year."

Anwar also touched on the rationalisation of diesel and electricity subsidies, which he said would save the government RM8 billion annually.

He said the rationalisation of electricity tariffs last year translated into RM4.5 billion in annual savings, while the reform of diesel subsidies would save the government RM4 billion per year.

"The RM8 billion in subsidies was enjoyed by the wealthy and foreigners. I say this because the issue is being politicised by

certain parties."

Anwar said Sabah and Sarawak were excluded from the diesel rationalisation exercise as diesel was more widely used in East Malaysia, where more challenging terrains require the use of four-wheel drive vehicles.

On another matter, Anwar said he was aware some parties were using racial and religious sentiments to disrupt the harmony of the country's multiracial society.

He said as long as his government was in power, there would be no room for such sentiments, vowing the government would not compromise on this.

Anwar said he accepted the invitation to officiate the Kaamatan closing ceremony to send a message about the importance of unity in the country.

"This is not only an honour, but also a sign of close cooperation between the state and federal governments and our open attitude in honouring the beautiful cultural diversity in our country.

"But we must be vigilant because there are some who raise racial and ethnic sentiments, as seen in political clashes in the peninsula.

"Some people push narrow racial sentiments and reject other ethnic groups' rights. Some play up religious sentiments, considering all others as worthless."

He said the federal government adhered to the Constitution on the religious, cultural and linguistic rights of every ethnic group.

He said his government would never breach these rights as they were the strength of the country that must always be preserved.

Anwar said while the government was open to criticism or suggestions, even on difficult matters, there should not be insults based on ethnicity and religion.