

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

'GOVT ADDRESSING CITIZENSHIP WOES'

Amendments on citizenship rights will tackle issue of children born overseas, says PM

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THE proposed amendments to Article 14(1)(b) of the Federal Constitution will bring an end to citizenship woes faced by those

born overseas.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the amendment proposed by the government, which will be tabled in Parliament this month, would address issues regarding citizenship rights of children born overseas to Malaysian parents.

Anwar said this when answering a question from a Malaysian woman during an engagement session at a breaking-of-fast event with the Malaysian diaspora here.

The woman had expressed dismay that her two children could not obtain Malaysian citizenship.

The prime minister was referring to the proposed amendment which would give equal right to Malaysian women to obtain citizenship for their children born overseas to foreign fathers.

"Please follow (the) developments back home... your question has been overtaken by events. The cabinet has agreed to bring this matter to Parliament this month.

"We know that at the moment, parent is defined as father. We will amend it so that parent will mean father and mother," he said, to loud applause from the 300-strong crowd.

The prime minister also fielded

a question from Global Bersih secretary-general Nirmala Devi Windgatter, who had asked if the government would be simplifying the voting process during general elections for Malaysians living abroad.

She had cited the experiences faced by Malaysians abroad during the 13th and 14th general elections, in which many had faced difficulty in casting their votes.

Anwar, in reply, said he had instructed the Election Commission to study the matter.

He acknowledged that there was a need to simplify the voting process and suggested that government agency offices abroad

be used as venues for voting centres.

"For example, agencies like Mida (Malaysian Investment Development Authority) and Matrade (Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation) have offices abroad which can be used as voting centres," he said.

He said the matter should be even easier to resolve soon given that automatic voter registration had been implemented in Malaysia and could in future be implemented abroad for Malaysians.

The prime minister is in Germany for a six-day official visit to Berlin and Hamburg.