

JAC review to ensure judicial freedom, says PM

PETALING JAYA: The government is planning a review of the Judicial Appointments Commission's (JAC) framework to ensure transparency and the independence of the judiciary, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said the planned review will involve consultations with stakeholders, including the judiciary, Conference of Rulers, Bar Council and civil society organisations.

The review will also address

any gaps and strengthen public confidence in the integrity of the national justice system, he said.

"Any reforms to the Act will uphold the principles of the Federal Constitution, preserving the doctrine of the separation of powers and ensuring the rule of law."

His statement came hours after a lawyer challenged the constitutionality of the JAC, particularly its power to appoint judges, claiming it violated the doctrine of sep-

aration of powers.

To this, Anwar gave his guarantee that this application for a judicial review of the JAC Act 2009 would proceed without any government interference.

He said the government will act with transparency, responsibility and respect for all constitutional institutions during the review.

"I am aware that JAC's structure and membership, as well as its role in the judicial appointment process have long been ques-

tioned by various parties, including the judiciary, the Bar Council and NGOs.

"Therefore, while the government will defend JAC Act's constitutionality in court, I wish to express the government's commitment to thoroughly review the JAC framework," he added.

"This review, however, will preserve the role of the Yang di-Per-tuan Agong and the prerogatives of the Malay Rulers as enshrined in the Federal Constitution."