

PM: ALL PARTIES MUST RESPECT JUDICIAL APPOINTMENT PROCESS

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Procedure set out in Constitution must be followed, says Anwar

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ALL parties must respect the judicial appointment process, in accordance with the Constitution and the jurisdiction it outlines, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

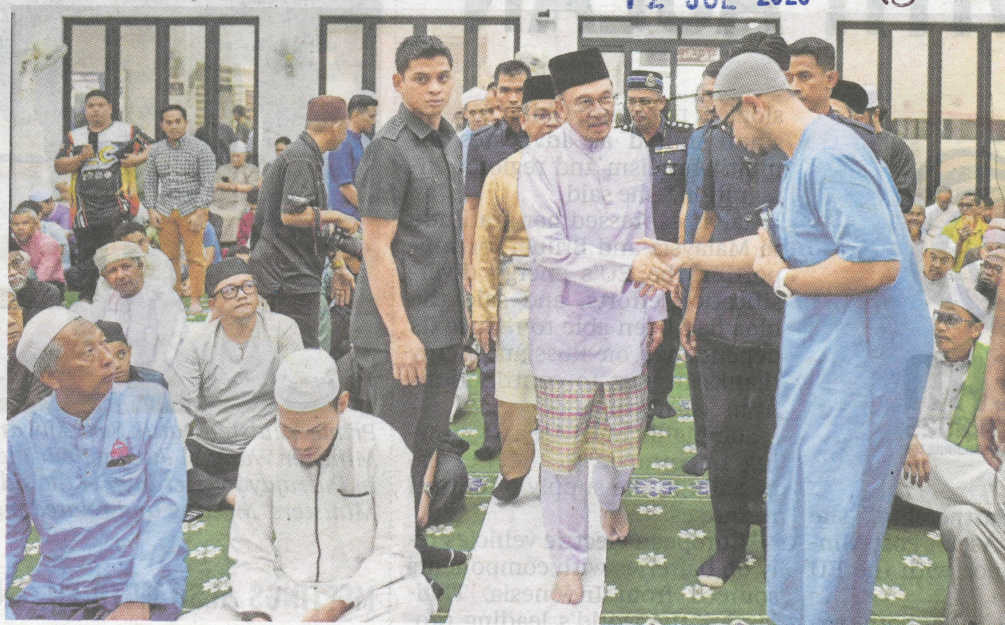
Responding to the Malaysian Bar's upcoming "Walk to Safeguard Judicial Independence" on Monday, he said while it was the organisers' decision to hold a demonstration, the appointment process set out in the Constitution must be upheld.

"That is their decision but we have already explained."

He said Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohd Dusuki Mokhtar, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform), Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said and even His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, King of Malaysia had explained the matter.

"So we will follow the processes and provisions of the Constitution," he said after Friday prayers at Surau Ar-Rahim here.

He said any proposal to amend



A congregant greeting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as he arrives for Friday prayers at Surau Ar-Rahim in Putrajaya yesterday.

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the Constitution must follow due process.

"If there are proposals to amend the Constitution, that is a separate matter. But in this area, we follow the process that has been practised all this while."

Anwar reaffirmed his commitment to the separation of powers, saying he had never interfered in court matters since taking office.

"As I've stated before, for over 2½ years, I have never interfered in any court decision."

He said what mattered most was upholding the constitutional provisions on judicial appoint-

ments and the separation of powers among the three branches of government.

Tun Tengku Maimun Tuan Mat retired as chief justice upon turning 66 on July 2, the mandatory retirement age for judges.

The Chief Registrar's Office then announced that Chief Judge of Malaya Tan Sri Hasnah Mohammed Hashim would carry out the duties of the chief justice in accordance with Article 131A of the Constitution and Sections 9(1)(b) and 9(3) of the Courts of Judicature Act.

Meanwhile, former prime min-

ister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he would not attend the Bar's march on Monday, but did not rule out joining the rally scheduled for July 26.

He said he would not participate in the event as it was organised by legal practitioners.

"I will not attend the Bar Council's march because I am not a lawyer.

"However, I will attend the rally organised by the secretariat, comprising not only lawyers but also non-governmental organisations and political party representatives," he added.