



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim meeting people at the Jalan Gaya Sunday market in Kota Kinabalu yesterday. PIC COURTESY OF PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

STATE RIGHTS

RESOLVE MA63 ISSUES VIA TALKS, SAYS PM

Federal allocation to Sabah higher than revenue collection, says Anwar

OLIVIA MIWIL AND IZWAN ISMAIL
KOTA KINABALU
news@nst.com.my

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said any issues over the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63) must be resolved through discussions and negotiations, not via confrontation or hostility.

He said the government is committed to resolving the issues comprehensively through the Technical Committee of the Malaysia Agreement 1963 Implementation Action Council chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof.

"This is being discussed now. Datuk Seri Fadillah chairs the technical committee. We have meetings to discuss.

"If we agree, we implement it. If not, we discuss again and vote again.

"This is how we cooperate, not by 'going to war'," he said at the Rancangan Madani programme here yesterday.

On the state's claim for a 40 per

cent share of revenue earned from Sabah, he urged all parties to understand the matter.

"I visited the Jalan Gaya (Sunday market) earlier, and people were shouting about Sabah's 40 per cent revenue. Listen and understand first.

"Yes, it is (included) in MA63, but over the past three years (since the Madani government took office), we have been discussing it," he said.

On Oct 23, Fadillah said that 13 of the 29 MA63 issues had been resolved.

Anwar, who is finance minister, said his government had allocated more funds for the development of Sabah than any other prime minister.

This, he said, reflected the government's commitment to uplifting the state's economy and infrastructure.

He said the federal government spends RM17 billion annually on Sabah, including on education, health, security and infrastructure, such as schools and clinics.

The allocation for Sabah, he said, was far higher than the revenue collection of about RM10 billion a year.

"We also provide support to Kelantan and Perlis, even though they are opposition-led states.

"To solve the annual flood problems, we spend billions of ringgit.

"This is our responsibility, to take care of Malaysia. We want

everyone to live well and happily," he said.

He also addressed the upcoming Sabah General Election, and said politicians should not become "heroes" only when the polls approach.

Those in power, he said, should address key issues, including roads, schools and healthcare, instead of focusing only on short-term popularity.

"Where were you last year? Where were you two years ago? Where were you when you were a minister and in power?"

"Why were the things you mentioned not implemented back then?"

Anwar's senior political secretary, Datuk Seri Shamsul Iskandar Mohd Akin, told Bernama that the prime minister's commitment to Sabah was evident in efforts to address the "AJK" issues: *air* (water), *jalan* (roads), and *karan* (electricity).

Shamsul Iskandar cited the Ulu Padas Hydroelectric Dam and the Pan Borneo Highway as examples of these efforts.

He said Anwar visited Sabah in December 2023, roughly a year after being sworn in as prime minister, to officiate the dam.

The dam, slated for completion in 2029, is expected to generate 187.5 megawatts of electricity, adding 15 per cent to Sabah's power generation capacity. It also has the potential to supply six billion litres of water daily.