

# PM on MA63: Talk it out, don't fight

## Let negotiations do the work, says Anwar as Sabah revenue issue flares up

**KOTA KINABALU:** Stating that the Federal Government spends more on Sabah than the state's revenue collection, the Prime Minister says claims under the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63) must be resolved through rational discussions and negotiations, not through confrontation or hostility.

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said RM17bil was spent annually on Sabah, including allocations for education, health, security and infrastructure development for the people, such as schools and health clinics.

The amount provided to Sabah is far higher than the state's own revenue collection, which amounts to around RM10bil a year.

**"If we agree, we implement it; if not, we discuss again and vote again. This is how we cooperate, not by 'going to war."**

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

"We take the RM10bil revenue and give back RM17bil. Why? Because there is cooperation between federal and state governments.

"We use the revenue to develop all states in Malaysia. Sabah is slightly behind, so we provide more assistance.

"We still provide support to Kelantan and Perlis even though they are opposition-led states. This is our responsibility: to take care of Malaysia," he said.

On MA63, the Prime Minister said the government is committed to resolving the claims comprehensively, including through dis-

cussions and negotiations under 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. 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 Rancakkan Madani programme.

On the claim for a 40% revenue return for Sabah, Anwar urged all parties to first study and understand the matter.

"I visited Jalan Gaya (Sunday market) earlier, and people were shouting about Sabah's 40%.

"Listen and understand first. Yes, it is (included) in MA63. Over the past three years, we have

been discussing it," he said, Bernama reported.

On Oct 23, Fadillah stated that 13 of the 29 MA63 claims discussed under the agreement had been classified as resolved.

The Prime Minister said to develop the country, Malaysia needs strong leadership capable of uniting a diverse society at a national level.

He said a leader's true greatness does not lie in the ability to fight but in bringing Malaysians together towards a common understanding.

"Whether a leader is great among the Murut, Kadazan or Dayak, or Bugis or Suluk, their greatness lies in their willingness to cooperate and strengthen unity among us," Anwar said.