

MA63 claims must be resolved via talks and not confrontation, says Anwar

KOTA KINABALU: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim emphasised that the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63) claims must be resolved through rational discussion and negotiation, not confrontation or hostility.

He said the Madani government is committed to resolving the claims comprehensively, including 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 it. If we agree, we implement it. If not, we discuss it again and vote again. This is how we cooperate, not by "going to war."

He was speaking at the *Rancakkan Madani* event, which was attended by Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil, Communications Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Mohamad Fauzi Md Isa and over 2,000

participants, including students and local community members.

On Sabah's 40% revenue claim, Anwar urged all parties to first study and understand the matter.

"I visited the Jalan Gaya (Sunday market) earlier, and people were shouting about Sabah's 40% revenue. Listen and understand first. Yes, it is in MA63. But over the past three years (since the Madani government took office), we have been discussing it."

Fadillah had said on Oct 23 that 13 of the 29 MA63 claims discussed

under the agreement had been classified as resolved.

Anwar, who also holds the Finance portfolio, said the federal government spends RM17 billion annually on Sabah, including allocations for education, health, security and infrastructure, exceeding the state's annual revenue collection of about RM10 billion.

"We take the RM10 billion revenue and we give back RM17 billion. Why? Because there is cooperation between the federal and state governments.

Sabah is slightly behind, so we provide more assistance.

"We still provide support to Kelantan and Perlis although they are opposition-led states.

"To solve the annual flood problems, we spend billions. This is our responsibility."

He said Malaysia needs strong leadership capable of uniting people.

"If a leader is great among the *Murut, Kadazan, Dayak, Bugis or Suluk*, his greatness lies in his willingness to cooperate." - Bernama