

## **Sarawak to form inter-governmental committee over status in federation**

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KUCHING, Oct 10 (Bernama) -- The Sarawak government will set up an Inter-Governmental Committee (IGC) made up of MPs and state assemblymen to study all aspects of the Federal Constitution and the Malaysia Agreement (MA63), said Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg.

He said the committee, which will look into the federal government proposal to amend Article 1(2) of the Federal Constitution to restore the status of Sabah and Sarawak as equal partners with Peninsular Malaysia, should be independent to study and interact.

"I appreciate the proposal to amend the constitution to restore the position of Sarawak (as an equal partner)," he said, adding that this IGC will be along the model of the IGC that was originally formed to report on the terms and conditions which the three sovereign states had agreed to in forming the Federation of Malaysia.

"I think it is better for us to look constructively at it in totality because there is an Article 161B in the constitution that has to be cited," he told reporters after officiating at the launch of the Fourth Borneo Water and Wastewater Exhibition and Conference 2018 here today.

Abang Johari was asked to comment on the statement by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Liew Vui Keong here on Sunday that the federal government will amend Article 1(2) of the Federal Constitution to restore the status of Sabah and Sarawak as equal partners with Peninsular Malaysia.

At this year's Malaysia Day celebration in Kota Kinabalu, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad had announced that the status of Sabah and Sarawak as equal partners with

Peninsular Malaysia would be restored.

This proposal requires an amendment to Article 125 of the Federal Constitution and it will be tabled at the next session of Parliament together with the amendment to Article 1(2) of the Federal Constitution.

On another matter, Abang Johari said the state government has set aside RM2.8 billion to implement the Sarawak Water Supply Grid Programme for Stressed Areas to effectively resolve water supply issues affecting the rural population within the next two years.

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