

MALAYSIA SCORES LANDMARK WIN AGAINST SULU CLAIMANTS - PM ANWAR
DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
NEWS
27 JUNE 2023

VIENTIANE, June 27 — The Hague Court of Appeal in the Netherlands today dismissed the Sulu claimants' application for recognition and enforcement of a purported arbitral award of US\$14.9 billion (RM62.59 billion) to be enforced in the Netherlands.

The ruling was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim here today before he departed for home after a two-day official visit to Laos.

“Won, Alhamdulillah. A bad episode which challenged Malaysia’s sovereignty has been brought to an end. We are thankful that they have failed,” he told the Malaysian media.

The purported final award was issued by a Spanish arbitrator, Dr Gonzalo Stampa, in Feb 28, 2022 to eight individuals claiming to be heirs of the Sulu Sultanate.

In their bid to enforce the US\$14.9 billion final award, the Sulu claimants were reported to have attempted to seize Malaysia’s oil firm Petronas’ assets in Luxembourg, assets in the Netherlands and also targeted Malaysia’s diplomatic assets in France (including part of its embassy).

The prime minister said the decision has blocked any attempt by the claimants to enforce their illegitimate claims against the Government of Malaysia in the Netherlands.

He said the verdict in The Hague Court of Appeal is another landmark victory for Malaysia following the Paris Court of Appeal's decision on June 6 this year.

"The Government of Malaysia is confident that we are now closer than ever to completely nullifying the sham and abusive final award amounting to approximately US\$15 billion issued by Stampa, thus consigning the claimants' flawed claims to history.

"Malaysia trusts that today's decision of The Hague Court of Appeal, combined with the recent decision of the Paris Court of Appeal, will put an end to the frivolous attempts of the claimants to enforce the purported final award in other jurisdictions," he said.

Thus far, Anwar said the Government of Malaysia has stopped at nothing in order to protect its sovereignty, national security and national interests, and the Sulu case has demonstrated a grave violation of Malaysia's sovereign immunity which matters to every citizen of Malaysia MADANI.

Anwar said the Government of Malaysia will fight by any means necessary against this flagrant exploitation and abuse of the international arbitral system, as well as take all necessary actions to recover the costs for the public resources that Malaysia has been forced to expend in dealing with these claims.

"The Government of Malaysia is confident that justice will prevail for the people of Malaysia," he added.

The prime minister also expressed his gratitude to Chair of the Special Secretariat and Minister of Law and Institutional Reform Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil, Home Minister Datuk Seri

Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, Attorney-General Tan Sri Idrus Harun and all relevant ministries and agencies including the counsels as well as other parties involved in this effort.

In 2019, the Sulu claimants took the matter to the Spanish arbitrator to seek compensation for land in Sabah, which was allegedly leased by their ancestors to a British trading company in 1878.

Stampa, who was appointed by the Sulu claimants, had on Feb 28, 2022 decided in their favour and the final award of US\$14.9 billion resulting from the sham arbitration was issued illegally by Stampa to the eight claimants despite the prior annulment of his appointment as an arbitrator by the Spanish court.

The group then brought the case to the Paris Court. However, the Paris Court of Appeal on March 14, 2023 upheld the suspension order obtained by Malaysia against the enforcement of the final award.

— BERNAMA

Copyright of the Prime Minister's Office Official Website

Source: <https://www.pmo.gov.my/2023/06/malaysia-scores-landmark-win-against-sulu-claimants-pm-anwar/>