



PRESS RELEASE

MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT (PARLIAMENT AND LAW)

Dewan Rakyat Approves Bill To Amend the Federal Constitution, Relevant To MA63

Kuala Lumpur, 14 December 2021 – The Bill to amend the Federal Constitution relevant to the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63) was unanimously passed in the Dewan Rakyat today – a historical moment for the people of Sarawak and Sabah.

Minister In The Prime Minister's Department (Parliament and Law) Dato Sri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar explained the amendment would truly give recognition the demands and special status of Sabah and Sarawak upon joining Malaysia in the Federal Constitution.

He explained the amendment would see MA63 placed in an equal footing with the Federal Agreement 1948 and Federal Agreement 1957 as it detail out the stage of the formation and the direction of Malaysia from the Federation of Malaya 1948 and to the direction of the Federation of Malaya 1957 when the Federal Constitution was being adopted in 1957.

When Malaysia was formed in 1963, except several items of safeguards, legal and special position that have been agreed upon, some promises in the MA63 were not included in the Federal Constitution and as such the Agreement itself was not truly recognised.

“What we are doing here is to place the MA63 in the Federal Constitution in order to become the real Malaysia in the context of the three agreements - Federal Agreement 1948, Federal Agreement 1957 and the MA63. It gives dignity to Sabah and Sarawak as being part of Malaysia, which then created this country,” he added.

Dr Wan Junaidi further highlighted that by recognising MA63 in the Federal Constitution, the government can now refer to all the promises made in 1963 in detail and spell out in the Inter-Governmental Committee (IGC) report, which is the in-depth study of the Cobbold Commission Report on the demands of Sabah and Sarawak.

As a result of this, the federal government can no longer say the demands from Sabah and Sarawak is not in the constitution or in the law of Malaysia because it is already in the Federal Constitution.

To questions on the tangible benefits derived from this, Dr Wan Junaidi said not all are about material and monetary benefits.

“This is about recognition of Sabah and Sarawak as the states in Malaysia - with a difference. An example of this would be having control over its own immigration borders, complete control over its own natural resources including oil and gas, forest and land and all things found under the subsoil of Sabah and Sarawak.

“In fact, Sabah and Sarawak should also have its own judicial commission which we still do not have now, despite being one of the promises under the Agreement. As per the Agreement, Sabah & Sarawak state government via the Governors, should have the authority to appoint the commissioner, unlike any other states,” he added.

The Bill is one out of four key initiatives to be carried out under the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between the federal government and Pakatan Harapan (PH).

The other initiatives listed in the MoU, which was signed in September, are: -

- i) Transformation in Government Administration – anti-party hopping law, limiting tenure of Prime Minister to not more than 10 years, implementation of Undi 18
- ii) Parliamentary reform – reintroduce Parliamentary Services Act, amendments to the Houses of Parliament (Privileges and Powers) Act 1952 and to introduce Members of Parliament Code of Ethics.
- iii) Independence of Judiciary

DATO SRI DR. HAJI WAN JUNAIDI TUANKU JAAFAR

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