

YOURSAY | Strength in numbers might help Asean with tariff woes

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Yoursay

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NMSparks: Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, you are now seeing the importance of Asean solidarity.

All this while, Asean solidarity was just a get-together with nothing much achieved.

When the Philippines was harassed by the Chinese Navy a few months ago, what did you do? Nothing. In fact, around the same time, you made a trip to Beijing, China to lobby for investments.

Did you bring up the issue with Chinese President Xi Jinping? Malaysia couldn't give two hoots about Asean solidarity then. The world noticed.

Nobody outside Asean takes Asean seriously. There is a reason why China always insists on dealing with Asean countries individually in its territorial disputes

with them.

If you could change course here and bring about better Asean solidarity, better days would be there for us in this region.

Variant: Asean is anything but open. This is nothing but a grouping of trade cheats and that's a fact.

Applying all kinds of duties and excise and Sales and Service Tax and other non-tariff barriers. If you want to negotiate, go with honesty and transparency.

After that remove all excise and duties that function like tariffs - trade fairly with the world.

VentL: I have to admit this is a good move. US President Donald Trump only understands strength. And this is strength in numbers. Trump will just trample over individual Asean nations. Just look at his punishment of Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

That said, how about bringing the Junta in Myanmar to book? Or for that matter acting again as a group to counter Chinese aggression in the South China Sea, especially in the Philippines?

Comrades in arms only when your trade benefits are threatened?

Considering how useless Asean has been as a block otherwise guess something is better than nothing as trading partners at least.

Anonymous2021552310: Agreed. It is a good move by Anwar but go there prepared to cope with various negotiation strategies, with our key trade negotiators with decades of experience leading the way.

Also do note that a win-win solution may not be easily achieved in one round of talks.

I hope by now the Investment, Trade, and Industry Ministry has all the calculations and trade models down pat.

KK Voter: Anwar said the move to initiate discussions is part of Malaysia's alignment with the "soft diplomacy of quiet engagement" as opposed to "megaphone diplomacy".

So said the megaphone politician.

Oct: It is strange and bewildering that the prime minister, being the current head of Asean, is not leading the delegation at all.

This just announced tariffs by Trump is a national concern and pressing matter for all Asean heads of state.

Now the new US tariffs affect Malaysia's economy and financial aspects of Malaysia, Anwar delegated a B team to negotiate with the US which by right, he should be leading it.

Where is the meeting of Asean leaders that Anwar promised to organise before meeting with Trump?

If Anwar cannot or dares not lead this delegation, this visit will end up going nowhere. No decisions can be made.

LimeLynx8453: I can't understand this rush to the US to "negotiate". It's a waste of money. Trump does not negotiate; he wants to win at all costs.

Trump won't last by engaging in a tariff war because the US imports almost everything.

Fml: Why are US goods so expensive here? That's because of the high tariffs imposed on them. The Malaysian government must play fair with the US under Trump.

We had better negotiate quickly, otherwise, being a small fry, we would lose out big.

Anonymouse_97321: Asean, like all other groups, will have to wait in line. It seems that Trump is assembling his best team to thrash out a deal with the penguins of Heard Island first.

With such tough negotiations ahead plus games of golf to fit in, don't expect anything to happen soon.

Mortal Thoughts: Many countries have been calling for dialogue with the US in the run-up to Memorial Day.

What makes Anwar think the US will consider meeting the Malaysian delegation?
Only fools will keep repeating other people's failures.

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