

Anwar: I don't bow to US foreign policy

Malaysiakini

13 November 2025

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has reiterated that Malaysia will not bow to US foreign policy, stressing that the country remains a free and independent nation guided by its own principles.

He pointed out that if it was true he had pandered to the US as critics claimed, then why would he have signed the Malaysia-US trade agreement with US President Donald Trump when he was in Kuala Lumpur for the Asean summit on Oct 26 and then a day later, sign a deal with China.

“Next week I’m going to South Africa for the G20, (which) the US is boycotting.

“I’m accepting the invitation extended by the South African president. I don’t bow to US foreign policy; we have our own,” he said during an event at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) today.

The US-Malaysia trade agreement has drawn flak from several quarters, who allege that it is lopsided and benefits only the US.

'It's not like I stole billions'

Anwar also expressed irritation over criticism of his brief dance with Trump last month.

“Even if I shake hands, it’s just a small matter. It’s not like I stole billions.

“There are people who stole billions, and no one said anything.

“But when I do something like this... oh, suddenly it doesn’t reflect Islamic morals and character,” he lamented, referring to the light-hearted moment between him and Trump, upon the latter's arrival at Kompleks Bunga Raya, Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), on Oct 26.

Anwar acknowledged that he was amused by the attention his “dance moment” had drawn, saying critics were making a fuss over something trivial.

The prime minister’s antics had drawn the ire of pro-Palestinian supporters, who mocked the gesture as being over the top for a nation like the US that supports Israel.

His political opponents also joined in the criticism, with opposition leader Hamzah Zainudin mocking Anwar, suggesting sarcastically that the prime

minister consider switching careers and becoming a dancer.

He had also said that Perikatan Nasional MPs were not envious of the interaction, but rather dissatisfied with the terms of the Malaysia-US reciprocal trade agreement.

Govt MPs want trade deal reviewed

Earlier today, three PKR backbenchers outlined several recommendations to the government, following their assertion that the said trade agreement is “heavily lopsided” in favour of the foreign power.

Subang MP Wong Chen, Pandan MP Rafizi Ramli and Setiawangsa MP Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad argued that while the agreement may have some positive impacts, they remain concerned that the deal was not entered into according to due process.

Noting that Malaysia has two legal options to “defend its sovereign interest”, either by requesting to amend or terminate the deal, Wong said the government must “walk the talk” as part of its commitment to good governance, transparency, and accountability.

Reiterating calls for a Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) to probe the signing of

the agreement, Wong said the commission must investigate Deputy Investment, Trade, and Industry Minister Liew Chin Tong's recent assertion that Malaysia was "forced" into talks with the US.

On Nov 3, Liew reportedly said Putrajaya had no choice but to enter negotiations with the US over the reciprocal trade agreement as discussions were driven by Washington's unilateral moves, with the two sides on unequal footing.

Liew today defended the Malaysia-US agreement, saying that the MPs misquoted him and took his remarks out of context.

He said the agreement was negotiated under difficult global circumstances following US tariffs and provides reduced tariffs, expanded market access, and economic stability.

Liew stressed that the deal does not infringe on Malaysia's sovereignty, with key clauses framed according to domestic law, and accused the MPs of spreading half-truths that risked creating market uncertainty.

Copyright © 1999-2025 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd

Source: <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/760670>