

## **Tariff issues can be amicably resolved – Anwar**

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Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said that based on Malaysia's experience, tariff issues with the United States can be amicably resolved with continuous engagement.

As part of Malaysia's strategy of diversifying its economy and trade relationships, which includes strengthening ties with both the US and China, Anwar said he had invited South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva as guests to the Asean Summit in October.

"And also your good friend, President Donald Trump, where the engagement has been fruitful," he quipped at a business forum with South African captains of industry in Johannesburg yesterday, drawing amusement from the participants as South Africa counts among the countries imposed with higher tariffs by Washington.

Some 200 companies participated in the forum.

The US has imposed a 30 percent unilateral tariff on many South African goods, which went into effect on Aug 7, 2025.

Anwar, who is in Johannesburg to attend the G20 Leaders' Summit as a guest, said: "I got him (Trump) to dance and relax a little and resolve the problem (for Malaysia)."

Reciprocal tariffs imposed on Malaysia had been reduced to 19 percent from 24 percent previously.

### **'It comes down to trade'**

On a more serious note, the prime minister said during his bilateral meeting with Ramaphosa earlier, he shared his view that the tariff issue can be resolved.

"I explained to President Ramaphosa that they need to continue to engage. I told the president not to worry. I told him, get him (Trump) to come here as I did, get him to dance and relax. And resolve the issue."

Anwar, who is also the finance minister, said that at the end of the day, it boils down to trade, which is equally important to the US and Malaysia as well as South Africa.

“So, I believe this can be resolved. That is how I survived. I am an incredible optimist,” he said, adding that what is important is the need to remain focused, have clarity in terms of economic policies, and efficiently execute them.

The US, which is the next chair for G20, has changed its earlier stance of not attending the summit in Johannesburg, according to Ramaphosa.

“We have received notice from the US with regard to participation in the G20 Leaders’ Summit. Discussions are ongoing,” he announced on his social media platform yesterday.

However, there is no confirmation whether Trump himself will be present or if he will be sending a representative.

The members of the G20 are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the US, the African Union and the European Union.

This year’s G20 Leaders’ Summit will be the first to be held on African soil.

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