

'Unfettered competition must give way to collaboration'

HAINAN (China): Technological competition should be one of the main items on the agenda for discussion at the highest levels, on par with discourses on security and general economic matters, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said.

He said with the current race which is centred on cutting-edge technology as demonstrated in the competition in the semiconductor industry, the rivalry to be ahead could take either a productive or destructive turn.

"Having said that, let me reiterate that unfettered competition must give way to spirited collaboration," Anwar said during a plenary session at the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2023 yesterday.

> World should focus on values that unite people as human family and not on divisive ones, says prime minister

He said acknowledging every country's needs to protect its intellectual property rights and stay ahead of the competition, certain guardrails need to be established so that the competition does not lead to a bifurcation in the technological world that would only raise costs and impede progress.

Anwar said Malaysia has introduced the Malaysia Madani concept as an expression of the desire to forge the country's path based on its own mould as it creates

a humanistic nation in line with its civilisational values.

"In this sense, it is also our national philosophy centred on six core values: sustainability, prosperity, innovation, respect, trust and compassion."

In line with this philosophy, Anwar shared his thoughts on how to achieve solidarity and cooperation for development amid challenges.

He said the world should focus on values that unite the people as a

human family and not on those which are divisive.

"Ethics, sincerity and integrity in dealings with partners in bilateral and multilateral situations should be paramount."

The prime minister said the concept of democratic accountability should prevail rather than merely trumpeting the term "democracy" which has been used as a means of pigeonholing countries according to rather arbitrary standards.

"To my mind, 'democratic accountability' enjoins on leaders to be accountable to people across the board, providing improved standards of living, transparency in the decision-making process and essentially the overarching practice of good and effective governance."

Anwar said ordinary citizens bearing the burden of having to put food on the table and facing tangible and pressing uncertainties must also not be forgotten.

He said wages remain the main form of income for the majority of the world's population but according to the International Labour Organisation's Global Wage Report 2022-2023, wages and the purchasing power of households have "dented considerably" due to Covid-19 and global inflation.

Anwar added that in the absence of adequate policy responses, the immediate future would witness a sharp fall in real incomes and a rise in inequality, which could fuel further social unrest, Bernama reported.

"In the light of this, we should work closely together in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity, striving towards reducing inequality, promoting social justice and enhancing standards of living for all.

"In closing, I cannot overstate that if we continue to cooperate, speak in a unified voice and exchange ideas on strategy and best policy practices, we can work towards an Asia that is stronger and more resilient."



Anwar being welcomed by China's Foreign Deputy Minister Sun Weidong at the Beijing International Airport yesterday.

BERNAMAPIC