

PM TO DISCUSS GAZA CRISIS IN RIYADH

Anwar to press for need to quickly address conflict due to Western bias, hypocrisy

QISTINA SALLEHUDDIN
AND NOR AIN MOHAMED RADHI
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim will press home the need for urgent action in the Israel-Pales-

tine conflict when he meets world leaders in Riyadh over several days from Thursday.

He yesterday said this was imperative due to the bias and hypocrisy of the West.

He said he would go to Riyadh on Thursday for the Asean-Gulf Cooperation Council Summit, and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Salman had asked him to extend his trip to Saturday so that an official discussion could take place in Saudi Arabia.

"I will also have discussions with my counterparts from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye (to discuss the conflict).

"As Western and European countries feel so strongly about the Russia-Ukraine conflict, but are biased against Palestine, urgent action must be expedited (to end the conflict)," he said in the Dewan Rakyat.

He said in every meeting with Western countries, they asked whether Malaysia would condemn Hamas.

"I told them that Malaysia has a long-standing relationship with Hamas. So we cannot agree with them, as Hamas won the elections



A large crater created by an Israeli airstrike in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip, yesterday. AFP PIC

and the people of Gaza chose them."

He said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir would go to Jeddah following an invitation from the crown prince and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

He said it was time for Malaysia to do whatever was necessary to resolve the injustice the Palestinians were facing due to the war with Israel.

He said the situation in Palestine was an example of politics of dispossession.

"Their property has been con-

fiscated. The rights of the Palestinians to their homeland must be restored."

He said if there was no action to address the situation, it would become genocide.

"We were asked if we agree with such actions of hurting women and children, and our stance is clear.

"It doesn't matter who it is. We do not agree with any action hurting the innocent.

"With what is happening in Gaza and if the world is unable to do anything, it means that the world is allowing the killing

of Palestinians."

He said he had contacted several countries' leaders to ensure firmer and tougher measures to stop the blockade on Gaza and Israel's orders that forced Gaza residents to leave their homeland.

He said humanitarian aid to Gaza must be sped up to help the Palestinians, especially the injured.

He denied claims that the government was unwilling to send troops to Gaza.

"There were claims by certain quarters that we refuse to send our troops.

"The armed forces leadership asked me to tell people that it is unfair for any group, in the delivery of their *tazkirah* (on the Israel-Palestine conflict), to claim this.

"It is not an easy decision to send troops, including peacekeepers.

"To do so, the humanitarian corridor must be agreed on by neighbouring countries. Otherwise, our planes cannot land."

Page 1 pic: Houses and buildings destroyed in Israeli strikes in Jabalia, northern Gaza Strip.