

UNGA SPEECH

Anwar's timely reminder to nations to revive faith in UN

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's maiden speech at the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) should be appreciated as he touched on various issues confronting the world.

They include climate change, unending flow of refugees, the Russia-Ukraine conflict — which poses a danger for food security worldwide — the unresolved Palestinian issue, the burning of the Quran, the humanitarian crises in Afghanistan and Myanmar, the global economy and socio-economic disparity.

He hit out at Russia over the Ukraine conflict, the Myanmar government for the various atrocities against its own people, and the Afghan government for excluding women from education and the mainstream society, as well as xenophobia, among other issues.

He also spoke of the Madani concept of core moral values that enhance the wellbeing of a society.

As for the UNGA hall having a

smaller audience, the blame should lie squarely on UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres and his officials.

Anwar even coined the term “mini-lateral”, meaning only a handful of nations cooperating for a common purpose, which has become the norm.

It should not be a case of “full house” only when leaders from the United States, Russia, China or the European Union speak, but should be given due importance also when leaders from other smaller nations take to the rostrum.

The UN needs to give more emphasis to UNGA as it is the main annual platform in which heads of government and leaders feel free to make known their stand and views on international affairs.

Much can be gleaned from their messages. National delegations need to be reminded to ensure that their diplomats, representatives, officials and others should attend the meetings and hear the speeches of world leaders.

If this is not the case, why are they



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, in his maiden speech at the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly, touched on various issues confronting the world. PIC BY AFIQ HAMBALI/PMO

coming for UNGA in New York? They might as well stay at home.

Today, the world faces the greatest number of problems perhaps in the last 100 years.

Civil and proxy wars, natural disasters, threat of nuclear conflagration, the looming danger of pandemics, refugees fleeing from their home countries, a polarised world, the rise of China and India and their implications, expanding military alliances, Indo-Pacific rivalries, and the decline of both the US and EU.

Anwar's speech was significant

in that it urged the nations to revive their faith in the UN as it was a global government set up for the peace and progress of mankind.

The UN has lost a lot of its influence and clout over the "decades of decadence", so to speak, and many nations are exploring alternatives like military alliances, political blocs, multi-lateral trade groupings and regional associations, which further erode the UN's power.

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