

'Work together to preserve peace'

Anwar calls on partners to address situation in Myanmar, North Korea

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JAKARTA: Several issues related to Myanmar, Ukraine, North Korea and Palestine became the hot topic on the final day of the 43rd Asean Summit, with major world leaders calling for constructive dialogues to bring stability.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim told the 18th East Asia Summit (EAS) that the prevailing geopolitical dynamics has made it imperative for the EAS participating countries to strengthen their commitments to the EAS fundamental principles.

"In keeping with the objectives of preserving peace, prosperity and stability in the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific regions, we call our partners to work together with Asean to implement the four key areas of the Asean Outlook on the Indo-Pacific: namely maritime cooperation; connectivity; sustainable development goals (SDG); and economic cooperation," he said in his speech during the summit held in conjunction with the 43rd Asean Summit and other related summits yesterday.

US Vice-President Kamala Harris, Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also attended the East Asia Summit in Indonesia, offering an opportunity for direct, high-level diplomacy between the countries.

Anwar said Malaysia is concerned with the situation in North Korea, adding that the country's



Good catch up: Anwar sharing a light moment with Modi (left) and Harris at the 18th East Asia Summit in Jakarta. - Bernama

incessant launching of ballistic missiles and enhancement of its nuclear programme clearly violated United Nations Security Council's resolutions.

He said Asean cannot ignore the concerns regarding Myanmar.

"And I don't think we in this forum could choose to ignore the concerns of the neighbouring countries in this region. We have to handle more than 200,000 refugees.

"We also reject aggression in Ukraine and we call for meaningful dialogue to reach an amicable resolution.

"But I want to take note here, the concerns of many of us, not said publicly, about the disproportionate treatment in regard to the recent conflict in Ukraine, and the

75-year conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory," said Anwar.

He said the international community cannot disregard Israel's continuous assault against the fundamental rights, livelihood and dignity of the Palestinians of all faiths in their own land.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the global rise of fascism and Islamophobia.

"We reiterate our position that the defamation of any religion is an infringement of human rights, and derogation of the right to religion and belief.

"And I think this forum with the presence of all prominent leaders must attempt to try and resolve these problems, issues these days," he said.

In a separate meeting, the

Prime Minister said that Malaysia expressed renewed commitments to work closely with the United Nations (UN) and Asean, particularly on efforts to find a peaceful solution in Myanmar.

The message was expressed during Anwar's meeting with the UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres.

"Both sides discussed issues of mutual interests including Asean-UN cooperation, Palestine and Myanmar," said Anwar.

Earlier Gueterres said he remained "deeply concerned" over the worsening political, humanitarian and human rights situation in Myanmar, a nation engulfed by war since a 2021 military coup.

"I reiterate my urgent call on the military authorities of

Myanmar to listen to the aspirations of its people, release all political prisoners and open the door to a return to democratic rule," he said.

Malaysia also expressed similar concerns over the lack of substantial progress of the five-point peace plan for Myanmar.

Myanmar, Anwar said, needs to fulfil its obligations as an Asean member state and adhere to the provisions of the Asean Charter.

Later, he attended the closing ceremony of the summit and witnessed the formal handover of the Asean chairmanship to Laos.