

'ICJ VERDICT A CLEAR STANCE AGAINST ISRAEL

But decision did not meet the hopes of Palestinians for a ceasefire in Gaza, says PM

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THE International Court of Justice's (ICJ) decision on Friday on the crisis in Gaza is a clear stance of condemning the cruel attacks by Israeli forces against oppressed Palestinians, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday.

He, nevertheless, is aware that the decision did not meet the hopes of Palestinians for a ceasefire in Gaza.

"According to *teman-teman* (brothers and sisters) in Palestine, it (the ICJ's decision) did not completely provide (an end to the war in Gaza).

"The decision, however, is a clear stance by ICJ in condemning the attacks.

"The decision by the ICJ is also a clear call for humanitarian aid to be expedited (for Palestinians).

"We will continue to provide the necessary support (for Palestinians)," he said here.

Reuters reported that the ICJ had ordered Israel to prevent acts of genocide against Palestinians and to do more to help civilians.

The world court, however, stopped short of ordering a ceasefire, as requested by plaintiff South Africa.

The report said that although this ruling denied Palestinian hopes of a binding order to halt the war in Gaza, Hamas, nevertheless, said the ruling was an important development that contributed to isolating Israel and exposing its crimes in Gaza.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan said the verdict was not only a victory for Palestinians, but also for Malaysia and other countries, which had wanted an end to the genocide by Israeli forces.

He said he hoped Malaysia's humanitarian aid could be taken to Gaza soon without restrictions following the verdict.

He said there were six interim measures set by the ICJ while waiting for a full trial.

"At the full trial at the ICJ on Feb 22, I will represent the Malaysian government to make a submission as a sign of support and hope that this case can be discussed later," he said.

Experts told the *New Straits Times* that they were disappointed that the ICJ did not explicitly order a ceasefire.

Universiti Malaya's Hashim Sani Centre for Palestine Studies director Professor Dr Mohd

Nazari Ismail said he believed the decision would unlikely prevent Israel from continuing its operations against Palestinians.

"On one hand, we are very happy that the ICJ agreed and accepted South Africa's argument that Israel is engaging in a genocidal act, and has called on Israel to prevent the death of more civilians in Gaza.

"The problem is that the ICJ did not call for a ceasefire. That part is disappointing because, then, Israel will continue to attack and kill Palestinians."

Nazari said the decision by the ICJ had placed countries with responsibilities to ensure that the killings in Gaza would stop by pressuring governments to cut diplomatic and trade ties with Israel.

"Countries around the world, especially Muslim nations, should not only sever trade relations, but also diplomatic ties with Israel," he said.

International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies Malaysia's Strategic Communication and Media Relations Division head Mohd Nur Iman Ramli urged the international community, especially the UN Security Council, to formally support and

strengthen the ICJ's decision with tangible actions and enforcement.

He said this involved adopting a resolution that imposes sanctions on Israel.

"Countries that abide by the Geneva Convention on genocide must now also act to prevent genocidal acts by Israel, so that they are not in violation of the convention."

Geopolitical strategist Dr Azmi Hassan said: "Another powerful word mentioned by ICJ is complicity.



"So we don't expect the ICJ to make a final decision on genocide soon because it will take some time. But again, the interim decision by the ICJ is still satisfactory because it puts the burden on Tel Aviv to prove that they are not conducting the war to kill civilians."

DR AZMI HASSAN
geopolitical strategist

"We know how Israel acts today because of the United States and to some extent, the United Kingdom, too.

"This puts the US and the UK in an awkward position because this involves international judges.

"And I think one of the head judges is from the US," he said.

Taking examples from other genocide cases, Azmi believes the trial involving Palestine and Israel would not reach a final decision soon.

"If you look at the Myanmar junta genocide case, it has been on trial since 2019, and in the Bosnia genocide in Srebrenica, it took 15 years.

"So we don't expect the ICJ to make a final decision on genocide soon because it will take some time.

"But again, the interim decision by the ICJ is still satisfactory because it puts the burden on Tel Aviv to prove that they are not conducting the war to kill civilians," he said. Additional reporting by Mohd Amin Jalil

Page 1 pic: A displaced Palestinian boy walking amid flooded tents at a makeshift camp in Rafah in southern Gaza Strip yesterday. AFP PIC