

MALAYSIA BACKS GAZA TRUCE TALKS

US should use its influence on Israel to accept deal, says Anwar

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Malaysia supports the Gaza peace talks mediated by the United States with Qatar and Egypt.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the cabinet agreed that the plan was a step to stop the continuous atrocities and colonisation of Palestinian territories by Israel.

"We believe it's a reasonable proposition to secure an immediate ceasefire and hopefully for a permanent peace, including an amicable resolution to the decades-long conflict.

"Our concern is the reluctance of Israel to agree to this proposal and the display of sheer arrogance and continued aggression towards the people of Gaza," he said after launching the Malaysia Madani National Training module yesterday.

Anwar said his discussions with Hamas leaders showed that they were receptive to the idea of securing a permanent peace.

He said the peace plan, outlined by US President Joe Biden, was probably "the most firm position" that Washington had taken and should be supported by all parties.

"We also hope the US could use its influence to ensure Israel respects that decision," he said.

The US, Egypt and Qatar have been seeking to mediate an end to the war for months, but it was reported that Israel was only willing to suspend the war in exchange for hostages.

The plan, among others, called for the withdrawal of the Israel military from populated areas of Gaza during a six-week ceasefire,

and for Hamas and Israel to negotiate terms for a permanent end to hostilities.

The third phase of the plan would allow for the reconstruction of the enclave, and an end to a devastating war in which Israel has killed more than 36,000 Palestinians.

However, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted his country would pursue the war until it had reached all of its aims, including the destruction of Hamas's military and administrative capabilities.

Israeli forces hammered Rafah in southern Gaza with tanks and artillery, just hours after Biden said Israel was offering a new roadmap towards a full ceasefire on May 31.

On another matter, Anwar said the Malaysia Madani National Training played a vital role in propelling youth to grab opportunities in today's "new realities", such as emphasis on digital matters, new energy resources and artificial intelligence.

He said the module placed importance on patriotism by focusing on the sacrifices of Malaysia's forefathers.

"In the module, we appreciate the past leaders of the peninsula, Sabah and Sarawak.

"However, appreciating them doesn't mean we're bound to stay as we are," he said in a keynote speech.

Akademi Kenegaraan Malaysia (AKM), under the Prime Minister's Department, would collaborate with all parties to ensure the training programme's effectiveness.

The academy, formerly known as the Institute of Leadership Excellence and Development, was under the Youth and Sports Ministry before being transferred to the department in January.

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**DATUK SERI ANWAR
IBRAHIM**