

Anwar presses for permanent ceasefire in Gaza

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MELBOURNE: An immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza is imperative, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Raising the concern at the Asean-Australian Special Summit 2024, the Prime Minister said all Asean member countries, including Australia, should push for this.

"All Asean leaders and Australia have voted in favour of the United Nations General Assembly resolution last December demanding a humanitarian ceasefire.

"We should urge for this demand to be realised, immediately and permanently," he said yesterday.

Emphasising the worsening sit-

uation in Gaza, Anwar said more than 30,000 Palestinian civilians, including over 12,000 children, have tragically died, including babies while famine remained an imminent threat.

"An immediate and permanent ceasefire is, therefore, imperative," he said.

He also called for the resumption and consistent provision of safe and unhindered humanitarian aid to innocent civilians in Gaza.

"Malaysia implores the international community to take bolder actions to compel Israel's adherence to the provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice in January," he said.

Anwar noted that Asean and Australia can play a constructive role within the international com-

munity and seek a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict.

He noted that ending the decades-long Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories is crucial for achieving a viable two-state solution and ensuring lasting peace and security in the Middle East.

He reiterated that Israel's aggression has intensified divisions and prejudices, fuelling the dangerous spread of Islamophobia globally that must be stopped.

"We should understand the fact that what is happening in Gaza is not about religion but a crisis of humanity.

"And we should advocate embracing our differences so that communities can live together in harmony," he said.

On the South China Sea issue,

Anwar said Malaysia, which is one of the claimant states, is firmly committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes under the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos).

"All parties should exercise self-restraint and avoid actions that would further complicate the situation.

"We should continue to maintain the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability and trade," he said.

Anwar also expressed worry over the prolonged Myanmar crisis, which is entering its fourth year without significant progress.

He said Malaysia remained committed to implementing the Asean five-point consensus, seek-

ing a peaceful and lasting resolution.

He also said Malaysia will work closely with Laos and Indonesia to ensure ongoing efforts to address the Myanmar crisis.

Expressing his gratitude to Australia for its support for Asean and the five-point consensus, Anwar highlighted the shared vision of Asean and Australia for peace and stability in the region.

Calling for more dialogue and peaceful co-existence for a safer and better future for all, he said Malaysia was committed to playing a constructive and meaningful role.