

REPORTS BY Hana Naz Harun and Amalia Azmi

AT THE
DEWA
RAKYA

'FIGHT FOR JUSTICE'

TIES WITH U.S. 'STILL STRONG'

PM: Bilateral relations won't be affected by Malaysia's stance on Gaza

DESPITE Malaysia's firm stance on the ongoing atrocities in Palestine, its diplomatic relations with the United States remain strong, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said yesterday.

He said Malaysia would continue its comprehensive partnerships in investment, trade and diplomacy, adding that bilateral trade between Malaysia and the US had increased by 29.1 per cent in the first 10 months of the year, reaching RM264.28 billion.

Anwar responded to concerns raised by RSN Rayer (PH-Jelutong), who questioned whether

Malaysia's vocal support for Palestine could lead to trade sanctions from the US, during prime minister's question time in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

"Our monitoring shows that these tariff hikes do not involve foreign policy issues, including matters related to Gaza or Palestine. It concerns the balance of payments between two countries where a deficit exists, as US President-elect Donald Trump announced during his presidential campaign.

"We will continue to establish relations with the new US administration to the best of our ability, while maintaining our sovereign stance on international issues, including violence, tyranny, oppression and the occupation in Palestine and Gaza," he added.

Reaffirming Malaysia's unwavering commitment to justice, Anwar said: "Malaysia's position in demanding justice for the peo-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim says bilateral trade between Malaysia and the United States has increased by 29.1 per cent in the first 10 months of 2024, reaching RM264.28 billion. BERNAMA PIC

ple of Palestine is consistent with our broader stance to defend any global community against oppression and tyranny.”

He also highlighted Malaysia’s past support for the Tamil community in Sri Lanka and the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa.

“Our fight to demand justice for Palestinians is part of our consistent stance in standing against oppression, regardless of religion, background or politics.”

Anwar also addressed Malaysia’s position on the 1948 Genocide Convention.

“We are ready to reassess this decision, but discussions must take place within the Parliamentary Select Committee regarding the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).”

He said Malaysia had reservations about the Rome Statute due to provisions that could affect Bumiputera rights, religion and LGBT rights.

“If there is a consensus, we can move forward, even though some matters concerning the Federal

Constitution and the Conference of Rulers need to be carefully considered.”

Anwar further clarified Malaysia’s firm stance on genocide, citing his recent discussions with Colombian President Gustavo Petro at the G20 Leaders’ Summit.

“In my speech at the G20 Leaders’ Summit, I emphasised that genocide is genocide, and Petro supported Malaysia’s stance.

“We are exploring all options, including sending a representative to the International Court of Justice to state our position, even though Malaysia cannot submit a complaint as we are not a member.”

Anwar also gave his assurance that Malaysia would continue advocating for Palestinian rights at international forums.

“We will boost efforts through the Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Industry Ministries, as well as others to ensure bilateral relations with all recognised countries continue, excluding Israel.”