

Anwar: Focus is on justice

Economic concerns won't restrict Palestine advocacy, says PM

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KUALA LUMPUR: Economic considerations, although crucial, will not restrict Malaysia's stance in advocating justice for the people of Palestine, especially in Gaza, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"I do not believe that economic considerations, while very important, can affect our stance in voicing the rights, demands and justice for the people of Palestine, especially in Gaza," he added.

On Malaysia's relations with the United States, the Prime Minister said ties between both countries remain strong, sustaining a comprehensive partnership and cooperation.

He cited that from January to October this year, total bilateral trade between Malaysia and the United States saw an increase of 29.1% or RM264.28bil (US\$57.76bil), up from RM204.78bil (US\$45.09bil) for the same period in 2023.

A total of 1,321 projects have been implemented and are ready to be managed, with a total investment amounting to US\$39bil (RM173bil), he said during Prime



Unbowed: Anwar speaking during Prime Minister Question Time at the Dewan Rakyat. — Bernama

Minister Question Time in response to RSN Rayer (PH-Jelutong).

Rayer had asked the Prime Minister to state whether Malaysia faces any risk of trade sanctions from the United States due to his outspoken stance in defending the rights of the Palestinian people.

Anwar, however, expressed concern about recent developments in the United States, including tariff-related actions for Mexico, Canada and China.

"We are now conducting all

relations with the new team to the best of our ability.

"However, as a sovereign country, our position on international issues, including terrorism, injustice, oppression and colonisation in Palestine and Gaza, will continue to be voiced," he added.

Reports claim that as soon as he returns to the White House, US president-elect Donald Trump will impose high import tariffs on all goods from Mexico and Canada as well as additional tariffs on goods from China.

In response to another ques-

tion, the Prime Minister stated that it is challenging for Malaysia to directly participate in South Africa's application to initiate proceedings against Israel for violations against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip before the International Court of Justice.

He clarified that the Rome Statute, of which Malaysia is not a part, governs South Africa's application.

"Moving forward, perhaps our select Committee can hold discussions along party lines to review the Rome Statute provisions. If there is an agreement, we can proceed.

"But I must state that we have concerns when comparing it to the Federal Constitution and the stance of the Malay Rulers," he said in response to Ahmad Tarmizi Sulaiman (PN-Sik).

Ahmad Tarmizi had questioned whether Malaysia would take more decisive action to denounce the genocide in Gaza and support South Africa's application.

In December last year, South Africa submitted an application to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to initiate proceedings against Israel for violations against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.