

## ECONOMIC PLANNING

# PM queries opposition's silence on ringgit's rise

**PUCHONG:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has questioned the opposition's silence on the strengthening of the ringgit.

"The (United States) Federal Reserve move (to cut its key lending rate) will have an impact; it will lead to the strengthening of the ringgit.

"Although our friends from across the divide do not see this, (they) will continuously criticise (the government) when the ringgit (falls)," he said after Friday prayers in Kampung Pasir here.

The US Federal Reserve had cut its key lending rate by half a percentage-point, its first reduction since the Covid-19 pandemic.

It decided to cut the Federal Funds Effective Rate (FFR) by 50 basis points, bringing it to 4.75-5.0 per cent from 5.25-5.5 per cent.

Economists however said Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) was unlikely to move in direct lockstep with the Fed's aggressive cut.

In **Putrajaya**, unity government spokesman Fahmi Fadzil said the strengthening of the ringgit, which opened at RM4.19 yesterday against the US dollar, was testament to the government's efforts in improving the economy.

The communications minister said Malaysia was also seeing more investments and trade, and had managed to reduce the country's debt.

"Today, the ringgit has reached RM4.19 against the US dollar. This proves that the unity government, in a short period, has successfully shifted global perceptions of our economic fundamentals after we launched the Madani economic framework, New Industrial Masterplan and National Energy Transition Roadmap last year.

"In this short period, we have witnessed a significant change. The ringgit has strengthened much earlier than expected.

"Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan said Malaysia was anticipating the ringgit to strengthen by the end of the year, but *alhamdulillah*, we have achieved this before the end of September," he said at the Communications Ministry's monthly assembly.

He said the world was focusing on the semiconductor sector, and the country would become one of the most important hubs in the region for production and export.