

PROTECTING ECONOMIC INTERESTS

ANWAR IN TALKS WITH TRUMP ALLIES OVER TARIFFS

PM to engage with Asean and others to ensure a coordinated response

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is engaging with key figures close to United States President Donald Trump over his administration's reciprocal tariffs. Speaking at the 2025 Madani Aidilfitri National Celebration at the Melaka International Trade Centre in Ayer Keroh here yes-

terday, he said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan had spoken to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on the matter.

"I have reached out to individuals familiar with me and close to Trump," he said.

He said he would engage his counterparts in Japan, South Korea and China to ensure a coordinated response to the tariffs.

This, including an Asean trade ministers meeting on the issue on Thursday, would ensure the regional bloc responds in strength, he added.

"We must not act hastily, as we lack details on the scope of the tariffs, on possible exemptions or reliefs, and whether negotiations with the US can continue to ease this pressure."

He said there was a "clear consensus" among Asean countries



United States President Donald Trump signing an executive order after delivering remarks on reciprocal tariffs at the White House in Washington on Wednesday. The US has imposed a 24 per cent retaliatory tariff on imports from Malaysia. AFP PIC

to protect their national interests.

"President Trump is acting in what he sees as the best interest of the US economy.

"Therefore, we too must find methods, approaches and strategies to protect our own economic interests.

"Asean must move as one and act together to face this pressure," he said.

He said the government was doing its utmost to navigate the economic uncertainty.

He expressed concern about the shifting global trade landscape.

"The very country that once

championed free trade is now taking measures that go against the spirit of free trade," he said.

On Wednesday, the US administration imposed a 24 per cent retaliatory tariff on imports from Malaysia.

The US had claimed that this was in response to the 47 per cent import tariffs Malaysia imposed on its goods.

The Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry has disputed this 47 per cent figure.

The ministry said Malaysia would not retaliate against the US' tariffs but seek negotiations on the issue.

On Friday, Anwar chaired the

National Geoeconomic Command Centre meeting to discuss the issue.

He said any response and for low up towards the impact of the US' reciprocal tariff on Malaysia economy needed to be carefully drafted.

He said there was still room for discussion and dialogue with Malaysia's major trading partners.

"Malaysia is firm in its approach to maintaining position and progressive relations with trading partners, while safeguarding the interests and we being of our people, business and exporters."