



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim greeting the crowd after Friday prayers at Masjid Al-Syakirin in Gombak, yesterday. NSTP PIC ASYRAF HAMZAH

REGIONAL CONSENSUS

ASEAN PLANS UNIFIED RESPONSE TO TARIFFS

PM says he is tasked with Liaising with bloc's leaders on a common position

LUQMAN HAKIM
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

ASEAN members have agreed to respond collectively to the United States' imposition of tariffs, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar said Asean trade and finance ministers discussed the matter in separate meetings.

"Last week, we held two sessions, particularly with the ministers of trade and investment.

"Our main challenge was addressing the issue of tariffs, and there appears to be a consensus.

"We do not agree with the current tariffs, which have been paused for now.

"We agreed to take a joint approach, and I was tasked with reaching out to all Asean leaders to formulate a common position," he said after Friday prayers at Masjid Al-Syakirin, Gombak, yesterday.

Anwar said that during a meeting on Thursday, Asean finance ministers and central bank governors expressed similar views.

He thanked all parties involved in the discussions, adding that they were well-structured.

On April 2, US President Donald Trump announced a baseline

10 per cent tariff on all countries, with higher duties for nations with high trade surpluses.

Asean's Indochina members were the hardest hit by the tariffs. Cambodia was hit by 49 per cent of tariffs, followed by Laos with 48 per cent, Vietnam with 46 per cent and Myanmar with 44 per cent. Thailand was subjected to tariffs of 36 per cent, Indonesia with 32 per cent, Brunei and Malaysia both at 24 per cent, and the Philippines at 17 per cent. Singapore faced a baseline tariff of 10 per cent.

On Wednesday, Trump said he had been considering delaying the tariffs for 90 days, citing diplomatic engagements and goodwill.

However, the same day, the US increased tariffs on Chinese imports to 125 per cent.