



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim says Malaysia must end corruption, inefficiency and laziness, and capitalise on its strengths. BERNAMA PIC

AS ASEAN CHAIR

MALAYSIA MUST LEAD BY EXAMPLE ON TARIFFS'

PM: Clear policies, hard work and courage vital to rise above challenges

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Malaysia, as Asean chair, must lead by example in addressing issues arising from the impact of the United States' tariffs on the country's imports.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said although it was natural to feel frustration about the matter, Malaysia must rise above it by leveraging its strengths to navigate the challenge.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said this in response to concerns raised by industry players in the state as conveyed by Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow in his speech at the state-level Madani Aidilfitri celebration yesterday.

"Yes, we are concerned. Malaysia's semiconductor exports are strong, reaching RM200 billion, with 65 per cent going to the US.

"I told him that in any test or crisis, it is natural to feel frustrated.

"But we must rise above it by tapping our national strengths.

"We must set an example through clear policies and hard work.

"Corruption, inefficiency and laziness must end. We need a courageous mindset to face challenges," he said.

He stressed the importance of all 10 Asean member countries acting in unison to face the challenge.

"We enjoy good relations with the US, Europe, China and Asean. I've reached out to them.

"Let's continue our efforts to strengthen Malaysia's position and act in the spirit of Asean."

He expressed hope that discussions under the Malaysia-Asean banner would help resolve the issue positively.

He welcomed the US pause on higher tariffs for some trading partners, including Malaysia, describing it as a temporary relief.

Meanwhile, at a separate event, Anwar said mosques must be built with the right intentions.

"Mosques should be places where noble values are upheld to ensure community harmony, not spaces to showcase luxury. The purpose is to nurture piety.

"However, if the intention is not correct, it will not lead to the real practice of Islam.

"It may result in societal division. That is a frightening reminder for us all.

"Do we choose to be good, respectful and courteous human beings?"

He said there were those in power who sought to create chaos and disorder, driven by greed

rather than service.

"Some become prime ministers or ministers to accumulate wealth, with no concern about what is halal or haram.

"They take RM1 million, RM10 million, RM100 million even RM1 billion, and still it is not enough.

"What then is the purpose of the mosque in such circumstances?"

"There is no true understanding of its role. When will this end? The time is now," he said.

He was speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony for the reconstruction of Masjid Jamek Cherok Tokun at the mosque grounds in Bukit Mertajam yesterday.

He said the behaviour of such individuals was worse than that of animals.

"Even a python stays still when it is full, but those consumed by greed are never satisfied. They always want more.

"Some have homes in Kuala Lumpur, New York, and London — all amassed through exploiting others, while people's needs are neglected. This is the harsh reality."

He expressed his appreciation to the people of Cherok Tokun for their support throughout his political journey.

Earlier, he said the building of mosques was a shared responsibility, and that Islamic institutions must be linked with the welfare of the people through mechanisms such as zakat.

"That is our intention — to build a mosque that sets an example."