

# M'sia to consult Asean on tariffs

## Collective agreement needed to ensure fairness in international trade, says PM

**KAJANG:** Malaysia, as the chair of Asean, will engage in discussions with several member states of the bloc to reach a collective agreement regarding the reciprocal tariff issue announced by the United States to ensure the principle of fairness is upheld in international trade.

In emphasising this matter, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim stated that he has reached out to his counterparts, including Thailand's Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra and Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto.

He will also hold discussions with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and Singapore's Prime Minister Lawrence Wong regarding the reciprocal tariff issue.

"This initiative aims to create a joint agreement among Asean member states on Malaysia's response and to demand that the principle of fairness be applied in trade dealings between foreign countries, including Asean and the US.

"We are indeed affected, though the rates are high, they are still lower compared to some of our neighbouring countries.

"Therefore, we have decided to hold consultations with my counterparts," he told the press after Friday prayers at Prima Saujana



**Hello there:**  
Anwar meeting worshippers after performing Friday prayers at the Prima Saujana Mosque in Kajang.  
— Bernama

Mosque yesterday, Bernama reported.

Asean member states in the Indo-China region are the most severely impacted by the tariffs, with Cambodia facing an initial and reciprocal tariff of 49%, followed by Laos (48%), Vietnam (46%) and Myanmar (44%).

Thailand faces a tariff of 36%, Indonesia 32%, Brunei and Malaysia both at 24%, the Philippines at 17%, and Singapore at a baseline tariff of 10%.

According to a fact sheet from

the White House dated April 2, the 10% tariff on all countries will come into effect on April 5, while the individualised reciprocal higher tariffs on countries with which the United States has the largest trade deficits will take effect on April 9.

All other countries will continue to be subject to the original 10% tariff baseline, it was stated.

When asked about the possibility of Malaysia responding in kind to the United States, Anwar said the government prioritises

the nation's economic interests in addressing this issue.

"What is important is not about retaliation," he added.

Anwar noted that Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz is scheduled to hold a meeting with his Asean counterparts next Thursday to discuss the implementation of the tariff.

On another matter, Anwar posted on Facebook yesterday, saying that all aid or assistance for victims of the Putra Heights

gas pipeline fire must go through the Selangor government or PETRONAS.

"This is to ensure such efforts would be conducted in an orderly and effective manner.

"All forms of assistance and coordination efforts related to the fire incident in Putra Heights must be directly coordinated with Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari and PETRONAS chief executive officer Tan Sri Tengku Muhammad Taufik Tengku Kamadjaja Aziz.

"This is because close cooperation between the Federal Government, state government and the industrial sector is crucial in addressing this situation promptly and comprehensively," he said.

He said the Prime Minister's Office would continue to monitor developments and provide full support for all recovery and safety efforts being implemented to deal with the tragedy.

Yesterday, Anwar and the congregation at the Prima Saujana Mosque prayed for the victims of Sunday's gas pipeline fire and sought blessings for the rescue workers.

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