

PM urges end to border conflict

Special AMM meeting postponed as Thai-Cambodia talks continue

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia has called for an immediate cessation of hostilities as negotiations continue between Thailand and Cambodia to de-escalate tensions along their disputed border, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said Thailand had requested a brief postponement of the Special Asean Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM), originally scheduled for today, to allow the situation to stabilise.

"We are still coordinating and monitoring development. They (Thailand) have asked for a slight postponement of the Special AMM scheduled for Tuesday. We agreed to postpone it to ensure everything is in order," he said.

He said Malaysia has conveyed appeals to both Thailand and Cambodia to halt the fighting.

"This is critical. I am in touch with them virtually on a daily basis," he told reporters after launching a book at the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies here yesterday.

On Monday, Thailand's military said it was considering blocking fuel exports to Cambodia, as fighting between the two countries spread to coastal areas of a disputed border region two days after US President Donald Trump said the sides had agreed to a new ceasefire.

The two countries have resorted to arms several times this year since a Cambodian soldier was killed in a May skirmish, reigniting a conflict that has displaced

hundreds of thousands of people on both sides of the border.

Asked about the proposed fuel blockade by Thailand, Anwar said: "We are still negotiating to cool things down. It is very difficult."

Anwar had previously proposed deploying an Asean Observer Team led by Malaysia's Chief of Defence Forces to monitor the situation in the field.

He said the mission would also use US-provided satellite imagery to help check whether both sides are honouring the ceasefire.

Data from field observations and satellite tracking would be compiled and presented to the Special AMM, giving member states evidence-based and neutral information about developments on the ground.

According to Wisma Putra, the Special AMM has been postponed to Dec 22 and will be chaired by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan in Malaysia's capacity as the current Asean Chair.

The convening of the Special AMM follows a joint decision by Anwar, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet and Thailand's Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul on Dec 11 to address the escalating situation.

In a separate statement, the Malaysian Embassy in Phnom Penh issued an advisory for

Malaysians to avoid non-essential travel to Preah Vihear, Oddary Meanchey, Banteay Meanchey, Battambang, Koh Kong and Pursat provinces until farther notice.

"Malaysian citizens in Cambodia are advised to stay informed through reliable news sources and adhere to strict instructions and advisories, if any, issued by the local authorities and government agencies," it said.

For any assistance, the public can e-mail mwphnompenh@kln.gov.my or contact its 24-hour hotline at +855 122 16176 or visit https://www.kln.gov.my/web/khm_phnom-penh