

# PM urges long-term Gaza ceasefire, pledges rebuild effort

**PUTRAJAYA:** Asean has taken a firm position in support of a long-lasting ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, with Malaysia pledging to give its utmost support to the territory's reconstruction efforts, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said that Malaysia, as the chair of the regional grouping this year, is committed to ensuring adequate support is given to the reconstruction effort in Gaza.

"Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hassan last month had an engagement with all (Asean) foreign ministers where they reiterated that position.

"I'll continue the engagement with all the leaders so that we can give adequate support to Japan's initiative, co-chair by Malaysia, for the immediate reconstruction of Gaza," he said in a joint media conference with Turkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdogan here.

Erdogan arrived in Malaysia on Monday for a two-day official visit.

Anwar emphasised Malaysia's unwavering commitment to supporting humanitarian efforts in Gaza and other parts of Palestine.

"More pressing is, of course, the reconstruction of Gaza. Turkiye has shown leadership, as we know they have sent at least 100 ships of equipment and support for humanitarian assistance.

"This is spectacular and unmatched by any other country, as far as I know," he said, Bernama reported.

Anwar affirmed Malaysia's commitment to doing its part, utilising various facilities in Turkiye, as well as in Qatar and Egypt to support the ongoing humanitarian assistance to Gazans.

Last month, Anwar said Malaysia will build a school, hospital and mosque to kick off concerted efforts by the country to assist in the reconstruction of Gaza, which was heavily bombed by Israeli forces after the

war broke out in October 2023.

He said the reconstruction effort will be carried out in collaboration with the people and private sector.

"As I mentioned to President Erdogan, we will, of course, support the initiative by Japan to set up a fund for the reconstruction of Gaza.

"They are chairing and have asked us to co-chair what is called the East Asia Reconstruction Plan for Gaza and Palestine," he said.

Erdogan highlighted the ongoing collaboration between Turkiye and Malaysia on international issues, particularly in addressing the Palestinian plight.

"We follow the position of Malaysia on Gaza and Palestine," he said, adding that Israel must end its occupation of Palestinian territories and take responsibility for the damage inflicted.

Anwar also reaffirmed Malaysia's firm stance on the Palestinian

issue, condemning Israel's actions as a "colonisation project" and questioning the legitimacy of negotiations while the occupation persists.

He stressed that Malaysia will continue its efforts to support Palestine but warned against superficial diplomatic manoeuvres that fail to address the root cause of the conflict.

"And this brings us back to the core issue of Gaza and Palestine. We will continue our efforts but we are not merely walking in a queue. You can see ongoing abstentions and questions on the matter. To me, this is a colonisation project," he said.

He criticised the international community's reluctance to take decisive action, pointing out that negotiations remain futile as long as Israel maintains its occupation of Palestinian territories.

"I mean, how much negotiation can you have when the coloniser has not withdrawn?" he asked.

"The issue is not just political... it is also about land, houses and property.

"There are two key issues here. One is immediate humanitarian assistance. But we must also work towards a long-term, just solution to the problem," he added.

On another matter, Bernama reported that Malaysia, as the current Asean Chair, has proposed that Turkiye be included as an Asean dialogue partner.

Opening the window of opportunity for Turkiye's inclusion, Anwar said Malaysia fully supports broadening engagement to include key global players.

He added that Asean already engages with the European Union, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, China and India, among others, as dialogue partners.

Anwar said he had consulted Malaysia's Foreign Ministry to bring the proposal for Turkiye's inclusion to Asean leaders for consideration.