

Anwar calls for stronger Asean action on Myanmar crisis

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called for stronger action to address the ongoing crisis in Myanmar, stressing the need for inclusive governance to restore peace and stability in the region.

Speaking at the Asean Plenary Session at the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2025 in Davos, Switzerland, he said while Asean's approach was measured, there was growing willingness for engagement.

"We are progressing cautiously. The first positive indication in the last few months is the preparedness to engage.

"The critical point is peace must be secured and they must not be deemed to continue these

discriminatory practices or even what was deemed to be violence to be perpetrated against minorities or any groups."

Anwar said Asean's approach was not to impose a governance system but to ensure peace and prevent discriminatory practices or violence against minorities.

He also said that even though the crisis in Myanmar was not as contentious as conflicts in Gaza or Ukraine, it had persisted for far too long.

"Delaying means suffering for many people, including refugees in Bangladesh and even in Malaysia, where there are 200,000 refugees from Myanmar.

"The authorities in Myanmar

need to understand that we have to take a strong position because the failures of governance in Myanmar are impacting our peace and security.

"We will coordinate with the United Nations and Asean will continue to discuss this issue.

"We've agreed that Thailand will engage with Myanmar at a different level, and we will coordinate our efforts. However, we remain wary of repeating the mistakes of the past decades," he added.

Bernamea reported that the UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Julie Bishop, said during the plenary session that Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean offered hope for

mitigating the crisis.

She emphasised the grouping's neutrality in internal issues while acknowledging its responsibility in seeking peaceful solutions.

Bishop said Asean had stepped up with its five-point consensus plan, although its implementation had been slower than desired.

"The situation in Myanmar is deteriorating, but I do see a light at the end of the tunnel, with Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean and their new special envoy."

She expressed commitment to working with Asean to end the prolonged humanitarian crisis and fighting, and to bring the transnational crimes in Myanmar under control.