

# M'sia has to be pragmatic and make friends, says PM

**DAVOS (Switzerland):** Pragmatic dialogue and collaboration are key to navigating the complexities of international relations, particularly in Malaysia's engagements with major powers such as the United States and China, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said that it is essential for nations to engage thoughtfully and constructively.

"I haven't had the chance to engage with (United States) President Donald Trump, but from what I see in his pronouncements, I believe he will approach matters pragmatically," Anwar said during the "Country Strategy

Dialogue" session, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual summit 2025 here yesterday.

He was responding to a question about what he would ask Trump and China's President Xi Jinping if they were to share the same stage.

While Trump's rhetoric, focused on the interests of his electorate and the United States, can be concerning in a globalised world, Anwar believes that Trump is well aware of interdependence, reported Bernama.

"I think he also knows the interests of the United States ... with globalised trade, that require him

to listen to the diverse interests outside," he said.

As for his engagements with Xi, the Prime Minister said there is a level of preparedness to learn and engage on various issues, including the South China Sea.

Anwar highlighted Malaysia's unique position as a maritime state, sharing borders with all Asean countries as well as China.

"We have unresolved issues with Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, and the Philippines. (But) why is it that the problem only seems to be with China?" he asked.

"Is there a problem? Yes, there is. But the issue involves the

wage war over it? No."

The Prime Minister emphasised that these matters must not be approached defensively, but rather with a firm commitment to dialogue and Malaysia has been proactive in seeking collaborative solutions.

"(For instance), we still face some challenges with Thailand, but these have been addressed - one through a joint development authority and the other by focusing on joint development in the economically disadvantaged regions of Southern Thailand and Northern Malaysia."

He added that, similarly,

Malaysia approaches its engagements with China, which has become a trusted and Valued partner by emphasising the importance of ongoing dialogue and collaboration.

Hence, Malaysia has made significant strides in establishing itself as a trusted partner with China, while also recognising the United States as an equally important partner, as cumulatively it remains the largest investor in Malaysia.

"As an emerging economy dependent on trade, we have to make friends, and there's no reason why we should not do so," he said.