

Nation's neutrality affords vast economic opportunities: Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Malaysia will optimise on its geographical centrality this year as a conduit for electricity, talent and supply chain diversification.

Referring to the Asean power grid connecting Laos, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, including the Sarawak-Peninsular Malaysia connection via undersea cable, Anwar said it is "a fantastic field in terms of advancing Asean as a cohesive force" and as a regional

energy grid.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said Malaysia also wants to refine its expertise in oil and gas, semiconductor and Islamic finance.

"We can be global market leaders in each field. It's our neutrality and openness for partnerships that make us a natural hub for all," he said at the Malaysia Economic Forum 2025 yesterday.

He said as superpowers retreat from responsibilities, build walls of protectionism and

lean towards economic isolation while simultaneously chanting the mantra of a rules-based world economic order, Malaysia sees an opening.

"This is a rare opportunity to recalibrate policy positions towards economic pluralism, cooperation across multilateral platforms and decisions infused with a moral conscience."

Anwar said Malaysia's Asean chairmanship is an opportune moment.

He said in today's shifting world economic

order, an empowered Asean and a stable Malaysia mean "we are no longer satisfied with playing the spectator".

"As Asia becomes the centre of the global economy, Asean is projected to be the fourth largest economic bloc.

"The lion's share of global growth will stem from a combination comprising Asean, India and China. (This will) result in a burgeoning middle class and growing influence over decision-making."- Bernama