

ANWAR CONDEMNS ISRAEL'S SYRIA STRIKES

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They violate country's sovereignty and international law, says PM

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has condemned the latest Israeli airstrikes on Damascus, describing them as a violation of Syria's sovereignty and international law.

He said the strikes on Wednesday also breached the 1974 Disengagement Agreement between the two countries.

"Syria has endured immense hardship over the past decade. Its people deserve peace, not further violence or external interference.

"Malaysia stands in solidarity with the Syrian people and calls for an immediate end to such violations and a renewed commit-

ment to humanitarian principles and the rule of law," he said in a Facebook post yesterday.

The United Nations-brokered 1974 agreement was aimed at preventing further conflict between Israel and Syria following the Yom Kippur War.

On Wednesday, Israel bombed the Syrian army headquarters and government buildings in Damascus, as well as a column of government military vehicles heading to the Druze-majority city of Sweida.

The strikes followed a warning to the Syrian government to stop targeting the Druze in Sweida, where nearly 350 people have been reportedly killed in clashes that erupted on Sunday between the religious minority and the Bedouin.

The Syrian government said its

forces had entered Druze Sweida to oversee a ceasefire agreed with community leaders.

However, witnesses claimed that Syrian government forces later joined Bedouin fighters in attacking Druze fighters and civilians.

After the strikes, Syrian interim leader Ahmed al-Sharaa yesterday said on state television his government would protect the Druze community, but warned Israel that Syrians were not afraid of war.

Since the ouster of longtime leader Bashar al-Assad in December, Syria's authorities have been accused of suppressing religious and ethnic minorities.

Israel has positioned itself as a defender of the Druze community.

However, some analysts view this as a pretext to advance its own strategic objective of keeping Syrian government forces away from its borders.

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