

Malaysia won't bend to external pressure, says PM

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PUTRAJAYA: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has warned foreign powers doing business with Malaysia, including the United States, not to impose terms to pressure or undermine national policies, reaffirming that the country will not bow to powers that "cross the red line".

"Malaysia maintains clear red lines in international negotiations that our national policies must not be interfered with," he said.

"For example, if they (foreign powers) claim our bumiputra policy is discriminatory, Malaysia firmly says no. The country stands by its accepted and established national policies.

"Even if the United States does not agree with our terms, we will stand by our principles. We hope they will agree, but we have already set our red lines," the Prime Minister said.

He said the country intends to continue trading amicably with all countries.

"However, no country can be allowed to impose terms that pressure or undermine our national policies," he reiterated.

Anwar said Malaysia is currently engaged in complex trade negotiations with the United States, which include issues like tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump's administration.

"In the procurement system, Malaysia must maintain the right to give opportunities to local companies. This is a non-negotiable position in our discussions.

"Therefore, our negotiations with the United States are more meticulous and firmer than usual," he said, dismissing those who questioned Malaysia's stand on the US tariffs.

On another matter, Anwar called on civil servants to ignore those who said that the government has not performed well.

Pointing to the approved investments at the end of last year, which were the highest in the country's history, he said inves-

tors from other countries have shown strong confidence.

"The investment value in 2024 reached RM3.7bil to RM8bil, including major investments in the electrical and electronics sector and Amazon Web Services, which committed US\$10bil.

"This achievement has gained recognition at the international level, reflecting strong investor confidence in Malaysia," he said at a gathering with staff of the Prime Minister's Department yesterday.

He also cited several figures, including 3,494 manufacturing investment projects approved by the Malaysian Investment Development Authority between 2021

and June this year.

Out of the approved projects, 3,095 projects have been realised and are operational, representing a high implementation rate of 86.4%, added Anwar.

"Annual realisation rates were 90.6% in 2023 and in 2024 it was 79.2%. In the first quarter of this year, the rate is 49.8% (mostly new projects still in the early implementation phase)," he said.

He said Malaysia rose from 34th last year to 23rd in the IMD World Competitiveness Ranking, the only country to climb more than 10 places and attributed the jump to strong economic performance and government efficiency.