

Cuts hit contract workers

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PETRONAS re-sizing mainly affects such positions, says PM

PUTRAJAYA: The move by PETRONAS to trim its workforce by about 10% involves mostly contract workers, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"It mostly involves contract (positions)," Anwar said when asked to comment on reports that PETRONAS would cut about 5,000 employees as part of a "right-sizing" process.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said this after performing Friday prayers with over 500 congregants at Surau Al-Ikhwan, Jalan Pinggiran Putra, near here yesterday, Bernama reported.

Also present was Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari.

On Thursday, PETRONAS president and group chief executive officer Tan Sri Tengku Muhammad Taufik Tengku Kamadjaja Aziz was reported to have said that the national oil and gas company would cut about 10% of its workforce as part of its right-sizing and restructuring process.

He also denied that the state-owned company would exit its business in Canada.

PETRONAS had previously stated that it needs to right-size its workforce to ensure the company's sustainability in the decades to come.

It has nearly 50,000 employees, according to its website.

Separately, Anwar said he would contact his Thai counterpart, Paetongtarn Shinawatra, regarding the border dispute between Thailand and Cambodia.

Anwar said that as the Asean Chair, Malaysia took note of the developments in both countries.

"We will issue a statement (on the outcome of the discussion with Paetongtarn) later," he told reporters.



Meeting of minds: Anwar receiving a courtesy call from Muhammad Shahrul in Putrajaya. — Photo courtesy of Anwar's Facebook page

On May 28, Thai and Cambodian troops were involved in a brief skirmish in Thailand's Ubon Ratchathani province and Cambodia's Preah Vihear province, which resulted in the death of a Cambodian soldier.

Cambodia has since announced its intention to bring the border dispute to the International Court of Justice.

Thailand, meanwhile, has reportedly reiterated its commitment to resolving the issue peacefully in accordance with international law, as well as existing

agreements and memoranda with Cambodia.

Earlier, Anwar received a courtesy call from the new Malaysian Ambassador to the United States, Tan Sri Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob.

Anwar said that they discussed, among others, measures to strengthen bilateral ties between Malaysia and the United States, including strategic efforts to attract quality and high-impact foreign investments.

"Among (the topics) touched on included strengthening Malaysia-

US ties as well as efforts to attract quality and high-impact foreign investments from the country," he said in a Facebook post today.

The Prime Minister also wished Muhammad Shahrul all the best on his appointment, while stating his confidence in the former to elevate Malaysia's aspirations, image and reputation to the highest level.

On June 3, His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, King of Malaysia, presented the instrument of appointment to Muhammad Shahrul in a ceremony at Istana Negara.