

Tariff talks on track, says Anwar

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PM optimistic as US deadline looms, emphasises need for 'fair resolution'

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KUALA LUMPUR: With less than a month before the unilateral tariffs kick in, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has described Malaysia's latest round of talks with the United States as "going very well".

The Prime Minister said this was the message conveyed by Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz.

"This morning, I received a message from the minister that the meetings with the US Secretary of Commerce have been excellent.

"Our emphasis is on the need to secure what is fair for Malaysians and always represent the case for Asean.

"I have also urged my colleagues in Asean to do likewise, present bilateral positions and emphasise the need for Asean to remain as a cohesive force," he said in his keynote address at the 38th Asia-Pacific Roundtable in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Malaysia faces a 24% tariff on certain exports to the United

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States unless both sides can reach an agreement before the 90-day pause ends on July 8.

The Prime Minister said the imposition of unilateral tariffs by the United States had posed a significant challenge to Malaysia, as over 60% of its semiconductor exports were meant for the US markets.

"You can imagine the government's concern to secure a fair resolution to this issue," he said.

Anwar said Malaysia remained consistent in its stance that international trade must be governed by transparent rules and predictability, not by unilateralism or coercive economic measures.

"Disruptions in trade and the supply chain will leave detrimental effects on businesses, hampering economic growth.

"Malaysia will continue to engage constructively with the United States, China, India and the European Union in advancing



United front:
Anwar delivering opening remarks during the 38th Asia-Pacific Roundtable at the Hilton Hotel in Kuala Lumpur. — AZHAR MAHFOF/The Star

our national and regional interests.

"Let there be no doubt; Malaysia's strategy of active non-alignment is a deliberate and principled framework, designed to maximise strategic flexibility, preserve decision-making autonomy and engage all partners on

our own terms," he added.

Anwar said over the past two years, Malaysia had reached out to like minded nations in the Global South to cooperate.

"It is in this spirit that we have revitalised our pursuit of greater inter-regional connectivity and cooperation," he said.

He said the latest move by BRICS to include members and partner countries from the Middle East, South-East Asia, Central Asia, Africa and South America is the essence of bridging regions.

BRICS was established in 2009 as a cooperation platform for emerging economies.