



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim with participants in the 2025 International Higher Education Institutions Islamic Studies Convention at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in Bangi yesterday. PIC FROM ANWAR IBRAHIM'S FACEBOOK

AGREEMENT ON RECIPROCAL TRADE

PM REJECTS CLAIMS OF BOWING TO U.S.

Malaysia has its own foreign policy and remains independent, says Anwar

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MALAYSIA remains an independent and sovereign country, maintaining its own foreign policy and does not bow to any other nation, including the United States.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim dismissed claims that Malaysia had surrendered to the US over the Agreement on Reciprocal Trade (ART), describing such allegations as unfounded.

"If it were true that we bowed to America, then why did I sign with (US) President (Donald) Trump on Sunday (and then) on Monday, we signed with China?"

"This is the reality. Next week, I am going to South Africa for the G20. America boycotted, but I will attend at the invitation of the South African president.

"I do not bow to American foreign policy. We have our own policy. In Malaysia, we are a free, dignified and independent nation," he said.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, was speaking during the

launch of the 2025 International Higher Education Institutions Islamic Studies Convention.

Present were Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar.

Defending the ART, Anwar said Malaysia's exports to the US totalled RM200 billion, 60 per cent of which comprised electrical and electronic products and semiconductor production.

He said while the agreement granted the US priority, there was a clause ensuring decisions would be made based on Malaysia's national security interests and in accordance with its laws and regulations.

"We have the right to review and give judgment to cancel. This has been properly done, yet we were attacked repeatedly. Read it fully."

Anwar also recounted his discussion inside "The Beast", Trump's armoured Cadillac limousine, where he thanked the US leader with regard to the Israel-Hamas peace plan while stressing the need for a comprehensive solution for Gaza and the Palestinians.

He said a comprehensive solution involved recognising the rights of Gaza and Palestine as an independent and sovereign state, while rejecting Israel's continued acts of cruelty in the West Bank.

"I told President Trump, thank you for stopping these bombing attacks on the people of Gaza. He

asked, and I replied, 'Yes, we want peace'.

"Remember, both inside and outside the vehicle, while I spoke, I did not mention a 20-point peace plan. I referred to a comprehensive solution for Gaza and Palestine. That is a big difference," he added.

On another matter, Anwar said the government's commitment to combating cartels and smuggling had resulted in RM15.5 billion saved over two years.

He said cartels and smuggling activities had persisted for decades but they were left unchecked due to a lack of political will.

"How much money has been lost (before this)? Do you think these cartels, gangsters and smuggling networks only emerged in the last two years? No. They have been around for decades.

"This determination carries great risks for the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, Inland Revenue Board and the police. All face serious risks because these (cartels) have become so powerful."

Anwar also criticised certain quarters for remaining silent despite the law enforcement agencies' success in dismantling cartels and smuggling operations in the country.

"When you listen to the debates in Parliament, no one speaks up (on these issues). A few government backbenchers may speak up, but none from the other side (the opposition)," he added.