

**'COMPLETELY BASELESS'**

# ANWAR DENIES MEDDLING IN THAI-CAMBODIA DISPUTE

Malaysia acting  
as neutral facilitator  
between two  
nations, says Anwar

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**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has firmly rejected accusations by groups in Thailand that he interfered in the country's border dispute with Cambodia, calling the claims "completely baseless" and misguided.

He said those making allegations against him should first understand Malaysia's limited and

neutral role in facilitating communication between the two neighbouring nations.

"Let me clear the air. As neighbours, we are naturally concerned, but we are not involved. We only facilitated discussions to help them reach a settlement. We did not prescribe any solutions," he said after the G20 Summit here yesterday.

He said Malaysia merely arranged meetings between the armed forces chiefs of both countries and encouraged their prime ministers to speak directly.

"I also contacted both prime ministers and asked them to talk. Of course, (United States) President (Donald) Trump also spoke to them," he added, stressing that Thailand and Cambodia viewed Malaysia as a trusted friend.

Anwar said it was, therefore,

unfair for certain groups in Thailand to accuse him of meddling in their domestic affairs.

"I don't know about their internal or domestic politics that would lead anyone to suggest interference. Our friends in Thailand must not misunderstand this. Our only interest is to help them achieve peace."

He said Malaysia's stance on the Thai-Cambodia conflict was supported by all Asean leaders.

On whether he would raise the matter with Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul during his forthcoming visit, Anwar said he would listen to his counterpart should the issue be brought up.

He added that Malaysia remained committed to helping the two countries work towards peace and would not be discour-

aged by "small, disgruntled and desperate elements" making noise in a democratic society.

His remarks came after a group staged a protest outside the Malaysian embassy in Bangkok, accusing him, in his capacity as Asean chair, of pressuring Thailand over the disputed border areas.

The group claimed Malaysia and the US were attempting to influence Thailand's decisions.

In **Kuala Lumpur**, government spokesman Datuk Fahmi Fadzil also refuted the accusations, saying Malaysia acted strictly as a facilitator at the request of both Thailand and Cambodia.

"A facilitator provides an intermediary role when parties face difficulties communicating. Both sides requested Malaysia's assis-

tance as Asean chair," he said.

Fahmi, who is communications minister, said all conditions and decisions were set solely by Thailand and Cambodia before the ceasefire was signed at the Seri Perdana Complex and later during the peace agreement witnessed by the US.

"Malaysia did not interfere in any of these agreements," he said, adding that the cabinet had been briefed earlier.

He reiterated that Malaysia had maintained its neutrality.

"We do not align ourselves with any geopolitical power, whether China or the US. We maintain friendly relations and trade with both. On this principle, Malaysia is neutral, and it was on this basis that both countries requested our help."



Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil speaking at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.  
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