

Diplomatic chat: Anwar speaking to India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20 Summit in Johannesburg. - Photo from Anwar's Facebook page



Anwar urges G20 to act on trade gaps

JOHANNESBURG: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has urged G20 member states to move beyond rhetoric and take concrete steps to address long-standing global trade inequities, particularly those affecting countries in the Global South.

He said that while recent G20 discussions have shown an ambitious push for broader consensus on multilateral trade, investment mechanisms, and closing economic gaps between nations, tangible progress remains limited.

"We have seen this very ambitious plan to get this sort of con-

sensus, but in terms of the focus on multilateral trade, increasing mechanisms, investment, and ensuring that there are no glaring gaps between countries, it is still lacking," he said in a podcast interview with author and scholar Dr Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh here, *Bernama* reported.

Anwar, who is also Malaysia's Finance Minister, emphasised that countries in Europe and the Global North should use the mechanisms within the G20 to address the gross inequities that have affected the Global South.

"For too long, unfair trading

practices and the exploitation of poorer countries' resources have gone unaddressed," he said.

"We no longer want to hear hectoring and lectures or pious platitudes. We want to see concrete action. We are not in the colonial or post-colonial period.

"These countries are much more advanced, much more astute and are capable of articulating their vision," he added.

While acknowledging that there is still a long way to go, Anwar stressed the importance of expressing these concerns firmly at global forums.



Action over ambition: Anwar speaking at the G20 Summit in Johannesburg. Despite ambitious G20 discussions on multilateral trade and investment, Anwar says that real progress has been limited. — Photo from Anwar's Facebook page

"It is important that we come to some sort of consensus on this issue. There's a long way to go, but at least some of us should express ourselves in very strong terms," he said.

On Malaysia's potential membership in BRICS, Anwar said: "With major players such as South Africa, China, India and Russia all supporting our membership, we will just go with the process."

However, he stressed that what is critical is for BRICS to focus on new areas, technology and increasing intra-regional and BRICS trade, while continuing

engagement with the United States and Europe.

In the 30-minute podcast, Anwar spoke at length about BRICS, Asean, Malaysia-South Africa relations, and Malaysia's economic focus and social policy.

G20 comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States, the African Union and the European Union.

This year's G20 Summit is the first to be held on African soil.