

PM urges G20 members to address global trade inequities

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

"We have seen ambitious plans to reach a consensus. But in terms of focusing on multilateral trade, investment mechanisms and ensuring that there are no glaring gaps between countries, progress is still lacking," he said here in a podcast interview with Dr Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh.

Anwar, who is also Finance minister, said countries in Europe and the Global North should use G20 mechanisms to address the gross inequities affecting the Global South.

"For too long, unfair trading practices and the exploitation of poorer countries resources have gone unaddressed.

"We no longer want to hear hectoring, 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, astute and capable of articulating their vision."

He stressed the importance of expressing these concerns firmly at global forums.

"It is important that we reach some form of consensus on this issue. There's a long way to go but at least some of us should express ourselves in strong terms."

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

simply follow the process."

He said BRICS should 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 interview, Anwar spoke at length about BRICS, Asean, Malaysia-South Africa relations, Malaysia's economic focus and social policy.

Meanwhile, during a media conference, Anwar said he and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi reaffirmed their commitment to

strengthening bilateral ties, particularly in economy, trade, education and new technologies during a brief meeting at the G20 Summit.

He said the discussions highlighted the potential to broaden cooperation between Malaysia and India, adding that both countries would continue to diversify strategic collaboration for the benefit of their people.

"With mutual trust and respect, we can enhance this region's potential as a new growth hub." – Bernama