

## U.S. PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO KL

# CHANCE TO ADVANCE PALESTINIAN CAUSE

Anwar Looks forward to constructive exchange with Trump on shaping path to a just, Lasting peace

### KUALA LUMPUR

**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim hopes his meeting with United States President Donald Trump this month will contribute to advancing Palestinian rights and realising a sovereign Palestinian state.

He said Trump will attend the Asean-US Summit and the East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur, which will be held alongside the Asean Summit.

"I look forward to a candid and constructive exchange on how we, together with our partners, can help shape the path towards a just and lasting peace that secures the rights of the Palestinian people and the realisation of a viable and sovereign Palestinian state," he said in a video message on Saturday.

Anwar welcomed Hamas's conditional acceptance of a proposed ceasefire plan, describing it as a crucial development that rekindles hopes of halting the war and easing the suffering of civilians in Gaza.

"I am encouraged by President Donald Trump's response, especially his call for Israel to halt

its bombardment so that real progress can be made towards peace."

Anwar emphasised the need for restraint and an immediate pause in fighting to allow humanitarian aid to reach Gaza swiftly.

"Durable peace will not come at once. It must be built patiently, one step at a time.

"Yet there can be no delay in ending the anguish of civilians. This tragedy, which has scarred the world's conscience, must be brought to a close."

He said Arab states, particularly Qatar, together with Turkiye and the wider Islamic world, would continue to play a key role in sustaining the ceasefire process and supporting diplomatic efforts.

"The United States also has a vital part to play, especially in applying the pressure needed on Israel to honour its obligations and give diplomacy the space it demands."

It was reported that Hamas had accepted part of the 20-point peace plan proposed by Trump. The plan includes the release of all Israeli hostages within 72 hours of its approval, in exchange for the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails.

It also calls for a cessation of hostilities, the disarmament of all armed groups in Gaza and the gradual withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territory, which would then be administered by a technocratic authority.

Malaysia has long called for Palestine to be recognised as a sovereign state.

At the 80th United Nations Gen-

eral Assembly, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan called for action to be taken against Israel for its atrocities in Gaza and for long-term support to the development of a self-governing Palestinian state.

Palestine has been recognised as a sovereign nation by 157 out of the 193 UN member states, representing 81 per cent of the international community. It is recognised by the Holy See, the governing body of the Catholic Church and Vatican City, which holds UN non-member observer status.

In **Johor Baru**, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the invitation to Trump to attend the Asean Summit this month was not Malaysia's decision alone as the host, but a consensus reached by all Asean member states.

"Trump is the US president, but that does not stop us from expressing our disagreement if there is US interference in matters related to Gaza and Palestine.

"Our position has not changed. But as Asean chair, Malaysia must respect the unanimous decision of Asean leaders."

He said this after launching the Johor-level Mara Education Foundation Squad yesterday.

He said the issue of Trump's attendance might be raised at the next Parliament sitting, which begins today.

"Yes, there may be a private member's bill to debate the matter.

"They are free to differ in opinion, but we must respect the Asean Secretariat's decision."