

U.S. TARIFFS STILL TOO HIGH, PM TELLS TRUMP

Anwar says he conveyed Malaysia's concern during his ride together with the US president in 'The Beast'

KUALA LUMPUR

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has raised Malaysia's concern with United States President Donald Trump over the 19 per cent tariff rate, describing it as "too high".

Anwar said he conveyed the matter to Trump during their ride together in the US president's official vehicle, nicknamed "The Beast", upon his arrival on Sunday.

"On the tariffs, of course I said 19 per cent is still high. But he did

impose zero tariff on major exports, semiconductors for now, and I thanked him for that.

"I went in and, naturally, I needed a few minutes to learn about the car. But I made full use of the opportunity to engage with Trump," he told a press conference after the conclusion of the 47th Asean Summit here yesterday.

He said Trump was a good listener during their private discussions.

"He shared his views and I politely disagreed on a few points. He was curious about our rela-

tions with neighbouring countries, particularly China.

"He even mentioned his invitations to Brazil and South Africa and I took the opportunity to engage with him on those topics."

Malaysia and the US signed the Agreement on Reciprocal Trade on the sidelines of the Asean Summit on Sunday.

Key terms of the deal include US commitment to maintain a 19 per cent tariff on Malaysian-origin goods, with exemptions covering 1,711 tariff lines.

The goods include major exports such as palm oil, rubber-based products, cocoa, aircraft components and spare parts and pharmaceuticals.

These sectors collectively account for US\$5.2 billion (RM21.83 billion), or about 12 per cent, of Malaysia's total exports.