

PM's deft handling of Trump visit

Anwar manages to pull through what many other leaders are still trying to achieve.

IT'S never easy dealing with US President Donald Trump as his unpredictability and mood swings have legendary.

But Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has been able to pull off what many world leaders have failed at disastrously.

Not only was he able to establish a close rapport despite only meeting for the first time, but he also successfully walked away with tangible economic wins for Malaysia.

The zero tariffs on Malaysian electronics exports to the United States are a landmark.

Up to 1,700 Malaysian products, valued at RM21.9bil, will now enter the United States with tariffs lower than the previously imposed 19% on Malaysian exports.

While there are those who claim we have given in too much to the United States, let's not overlook the crucial areas.

The electronics and electrical sector contributes to 40% of the nation's exports.

The US agreement to stick to the zero tariffs is a game-changer. It is a win for Malaysia.

As with all negotiations, there are wins and losses, but a deal must be reached. There cannot be a winner-takes-all formula.



**WONG
CHUN WAI**

Comment

It is a breakthrough for both nations, while for some countries, the talks are still dragging on.

It is about securing Malaysia's economic future through deft diplomacy and calm leadership.

Malaysia has also proven its ability to walk and balance the delicate path of non-alignment.

It also involves managing unpredictability, as many leaders have found themselves in tight spots when dealing with Trump.

Depending on which side of the bed he wakes up on, tariffs have shot up for no clear reason.

Instead of pandering excessively or trying to outmatch Trump, Anwar used his charm, wit, patience, focus and empathy to win.

These are skills he has honed in his decades-long political career.

The right vibes began when Trump walked down from Air Force One at KLIA, where he was greeted by traditional cultural performances reflecting Malaysian culture.

But it was done differently as Trump swayed to the tune of the iconic *Hawaii Five-0* TV theme, which was captured on TV cameras and broadcast around the world.

The video that @margomartin (Special Assistant to the President and Communications Advisor) captured of Trump dancing in Malaysia has just surpassed 1 million likes on @TeamTrump Instagram and has a whopping 21.5 million views.

It also has 17.7 million views on Facebook and 9.3 million on TikTok.

Breaking away from protocol, Trump even invited Anwar to 'The Beast', as the US presidential limousine car is called.

It is indeed a rare honour extended by Trump, and in that short ride to Kuala Lumpur, Anwar turned formality into friendship.

What is evident now is that Malaysia has proven itself as a reliable trading partner.

We will do business with any

country, and we do not want to be dragged into any geopolitical rivalry.

Malaysia will give the same grand welcome to China's Xi Jinping as we did to Trump.

There are many Malaysians who dislike Trump, as with many Americans, too. But he remains a powerful political figure whose decisions have a global impact, politically and economically, and Malaysia needs to be on the comfortable side.

We have also become a global semiconductor supply chain player, and we should be proud of it.

Under the agreement, our microchips and related goods will enter the US market duty-free.

It will boost high-value job creation in Penang, Kulim and other industrial areas.

We can now assure the world that Malaysia remains a secure hub for high-tech component production.

Malaysia holds a sizeable amount of rare earth reserves, but extraction requires high technology, which only a few countries like the United States and China are able to do.

There are also environmental laws for us to look into, as rare earth materials are buried deep

within gazetted jungles.

All these pose challenges, and it will take a long time before actual work can start.

For Asean, as the chairmanship comes to an end, Anwar has demonstrated a leadership that will be difficult to match by other leaders in the region.

Many ordinary Malaysians have openly expressed their pride in Anwar's diplomatic performance.

It cannot be denied that his competence in speaking English has helped him win the hearts and minds of our guests.

The reality is - English language matters, and it is required to engage other personalities on equal footing.

Anwar has elevated Malaysia's standing in the eyes of the world, without doubt.

As one report rightly put it, "His steady hand turned unpredictability into opportunity.

And in doing so, he reminded the world that Malaysia's voice - calm, confident and constructive - carries farther than ever before."

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