

**TEKS UCAPAN VERBATIM: SESI TAKLIMAT YAB PERDANA  
MENTERI BERSAMA KETUA-KETUA PENGARANG MEDIA  
TEMPATAN DAN ANTARABANGSA**

By : DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM

Venue : KOMPLEKS SERI PERDANA

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**TEKS UCAPAN VERBATIM**

**YAB DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM**

**PERDANA MENTERI**

**SEMPENA**

**SESI TAKLIMAT**

**YAB PERDANA MENTERI**

**BERSAMA KETUA-KETUA PENGARANG MEDIA TEMPATAN  
DAN MEDIA ANTARABANGSA**

**21 MEI 2025 | RABU | 8:00 MALAM**

**KOMPLEKS SERI PERDANA**

**Opening Remarks:**

For the benefit of the guest from international media, do I have to do in English or Tamil? OK, thank you very much. It's more of an informal session. Relax. I don't know how a Prime Minister can have ever an informal relax session in the less time. Now I'll be very brief, you know, just finished meeting on the season preparations for ASEAN. Check and discuss of course the accession to Timor-Leste, position on Myanmar, issue of tariffs, issue of economic collaboration, ASEAN Power Grid, Vietnam and Singapore, and digitalization, and then to get more cohesive in terms of investment and trade.

Then of course, we have to discuss and plan a strategy how to engage effectively with the GCC. All the six GCC countries will be attending the conference and move into the vicinity to enhance trade investments, more effective collaboration between ASEAN and the GCC.

Following that, of course the presence of Premier Li Qiang from China that would also focus on some of these issues which we have discussed previously. But I think we focus on intention mainly in the economic collaboration.

As a trading nation, we have said it in the past, we continue to explore new markets and the traditional tender states in China and in terms of huge investments and trade is to explore new markets. That's why I just written to Russian Federation and then leaving for BRICS meeting in Brazil. That's it.

So, I mean, you can probably provide some views or what else we need to focus on or some other more... It's a free country, you can ask, and it's a free country I can choose not to answer. OK. I mean, be casual. If you raise your hands and ask questions, we will not take some of your names because special branch is not here.

**Question 1:**

**Bloomberg – Netty Ismail**

**President Trump has said that he will set the tariff rates within the next few weeks, because the administration lacks the capacity to negotiate the deals with all the trading partners. Where does that – you asked – in Malaysia in particular, given that initially seeking negotiate to reduce the terms, as the Trading Minister said, to zero. What are your thoughts on that? Thank you.**

**Answer:**

We had an initial engagement, Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul was there in the States, and to be fair, it was given — I mean good opportunity to explain our position. And it was quite, I was reasonably quite satisfied, meeting both the Commerce Secretary of the United States and trade representatives, and then there was a follow-up meeting, as you know in Korea. And amazingly, you have seen the statement by the ASEAN, China, Japan, Korea — which is, in my mind, very positive, because these shows that we are prepared to look at it and promote openly, but multilateralism.

But at this stage, it is a bit too early, Secretary of State Marco Rubio had a long session phone call with Dato' Seri Utama Haji Mohamad bin Haji Hasan, Foreign minister. I also talk to Steve Witkoff. But other than that, the United States has promised to look at it sympathetically, and review and keep us posted.

But notwithstanding, I've said, I must reiterate: firstly, economic resilient domestically, do whatever is necessary, then enhance ASEAN and new partners in China, India, Pakistan, of course Russia and even the European Union (EU) — the EU really has been quite dramatic in their decision to engage more aggressively and actively with ASEAN and we, of course, is responding fast on that. Other than that, we shall see.

**Question 2:**

**Seiichi Oshima, Jiji Press**

**I'd like to ask a question about Myanmar. The Five-Point Consensus has been there for a while, quite some time, but there is a new development in Myanmar, the earthquake which is beyond our power.**

**Do you think there is any need to alter or adjust the Five-Point Consensus in consideration of the recent earthquake?**

**Answer 2:**

We still have consensus with ASEAN, which is guided by the broad parameters of the Five-Point Consensus. Now, having said that, for decades it has not moved considerably.

So, when the earthquake happened and we communicated with all parties, they said to welcome the support, and our condition is clear, number 1: ceasefire, otherwise, we are not prepared to go because the field hospital requires an atmosphere of somewhat native peace. Otherwise, they can't operate. Number 2: no discrimination in terms of whom we would like to support or give aid to, and number 3: allow us to engage with any party basically because the regions are held by somebody.

Now, all these three conditions, acidity or not, in any agreement, are accepted or tolerated. That's why I decided to go to Bangkok, while meeting the ASEAN Advisory Team under Dr. Thaksin and meeting my counterpart, Prime Minister Paetongtarn.

I also had this meeting with the senior Prime Minister and also the NUG Prime Minister and our representative also met some of the people claiming the third force.

But at this stage, we are confined to only calling for ceasefire. Stop these atrocities inflicted against any other group, as number 1.

Number 2, they have allowed us, number one, there was a ceasefire and they have allowed us to enter two other regions.

For example, the SAC have not questioned the fact that we have set up some military assistance centers in the territories occupied by NUG, which to me is a very healthy sign. And number 3, operatives there are continuing to engage all parties.

Where do we go from here? It's still premature to suggest, but I'm quite pleased with this after a decade, it is the first serious engagement that we had. And of course, once we talk about ceasefire, earthquake setup, we inevitably touch on the issue of Myanmar's return to the ASEAN framework all these broad parameters.

Of course, there are people who when we met the senior general, the others protested. When we met the NUG, the others (protested) so that's understandable, but it was accepted. And they knew I met the senior general, and the senior general knew I was meeting the NUG which to my mind, is a very healthy, positive development.

Arrigato.

### Question 3

#### Anis from Bernama

**Dato' Seri, what is the bold strategic narrative that you intend to drive not just for this summit but for ASEAN's next phase as a regional block amid intensifying global rivalries. And the second one is, a geopolitical competition escalating in the Indo Pacific with the Malaysian lead efforts to redefine ASEAN's global standing not just as a neutral platform, but as a proactive values even regional force. Thank you, Dato' Seri.**

#### **Answer:**

Where BERNAMA learn to ask difficult questions? I'm just joking. Now, very complex questions. We have announced at first our trust to ASEAN this year is of course to strengthen the cohesiveness and to increase interest and trade, to focus on the economy and investments of our countries. Then specific program includes the ASEAN power grid which, Alhamdulillah will get successful. Petronas can be assigned with petrol Vietnam and probably one of the sessions, both Vietnam and Singapore.

Of course, the later phase by land, there will be of course Laos, Cambodia, Thailand being hold. But the first phase of course was deemed to be more

economic, is to do the undersea cable from Vietnam to North Malaysia and South using the national GRID into Singapore, then of course Sarawak.

This is huge capacity for alternative entity including gas and petrol to go to Sabah and then to the new university capital Kalimantan and to South Philippines. Some of this is of course, something that needs to be explored, particularly more so because we have settled the Petros-Petronas issue, which used to seem to be too excited about, and I was more relaxed. Give it some time, wisdom and sanity would fail. I think that's about enough.

#### **Question 4:**

##### **Jan Hennop from Agence France-Presse (AFP)**

I've got a question about ASEAN and I would like to ask you whether ASEAN would continue to push for a policy of maintaining good relationships with both the United States and China. And then my second question is, if so, is there a possible danger or a possibility that position can be abused by either of the two powers for the unadvantage?

#### **Answer:**

Merci beaucoup. Yes. How do we navigate? We made very clear centrality of the policy pillar within ASEAN and to showcase, we continue to engage with United States. It's still the number one investor in the country and it's still ongoing. The latest was AWS, the NVIDIA was earlier and then China, you know, Xi Jinping was here, Li Qiang was here. Premier Li Qiang

coming next week or end of this week. And then we go to Russia, I'm going to Italy, France. I mean, so as far as we are concerned that policy should be made known and that as a trading nation, that is to me the most appropriate reasonable policy you should adopt because of course both questions leading to our relation with China. But as I have said, relation has been good. We don't have problems with China and then there's no reason why we should not decide independently. So that is the position, but I think as a trade nation, we do not venture to new markets and build up that resilience nationally and also regionally we will not win. So, that's the most pragmatic decision we should make. There are of course problems as expected. I mean, domestically we have problems with our all our neighbors as a maritime country has always said that you know, and people say, oh, you'll be biased to China because you don't seem to see that there are problems. I said there are problems all over our neighbors. I mean, we have excellent relation with Singapore now with economic zone, we're entering into this series of negotiations with Thailand borders, but it doesn't suggest that we have resolved the border issue with them or the Philippines or Brunei or Indonesia. So, I think we should adopt a more pragmatic position.

## **Question 5**

### **Joseph Sipalan, South China Morning Post**

**Hi, good evening I am Joseph Sipalan from the South China Morning Post. Just two very quick questions. Last month during The ASEAN Economic Ministers Meeting, ASEAN took a position of taking a unified position to address US tariffs.**

**But just a week or two after that, the four largest economies in ASEAN decided to pursue bilateral negotiations with the US. How does that jive in the position that ASEAN is taking? And what's the next step on the summit meet next week?**

**And the second question would be a little bit more personal in nature. Your chairmanship of ASEAN this year comes with two very big issues that you have to deal with your predecessors not really have to address. Well, Myanmar was there, but right now it's four years into the civil war and they haven't been very responsive until recently. And then the tariffs are there and that's quite unprecedented. How important is it to you that Malaysia and you yourself achieve something at the summit and during a Malaysia's term as chairman this year? Thank you.**

**Answer:**

Well as I said, very fragmenting your policies. We try our best. I don't think we have some, you know, dream that we can resolve the problems the world, but we should be able at least to build what's to me critically or critical importance is to build that cohesiveness within ASEAN.

Yeah, we have never suggested that the bilateral recession should not go because they have peculiar problems. I've communicated with all ASEAN leaders, number 1, the bilateral sessions will continue, but continue with that, we did say they should be always be the ASEAN position, always appeal or in our negotiation with the United States to suggest that look ASEAN is the 640 million people and we have trillion dollars strength. We

want to call us some recognition because we are an emerging economy that is the most peaceful in the world and economically most vibrant.

That's the position and in my call to all ASEAN leaders, they in fact did mention "Anwar, please coordinate." So, not only with ASEAN but with Japan, with China, with Korea. We do compare notes with ASEAN, for example, when Zafrul went and came back, he shared the notes to the ASEAN leaders. Similarly, there has been that sort of very active engagement to understand and to always say that we prefer to be viewed it as ASEAN and try to resolve it adequately.

We also agreed, for example, not to be too combative because we are getting old, but our decisions to make sure they will continue to negotiate.

At the same time, we are not actually to be wavering in our position of centrality. That's why in the height of this negotiation with the United States. We welcome President Xi Jinping here and we are not contemplating this as our position. And, and we were glad that he was never raised as an issue with the United States.

For second question, as I've said, are, I mean reasonably pragmatic. I mean, we do our best. I don't have a big dream of solving the problem of the world in one year. We are a small player in the region, but we need, of course, I say nationally, politically stable, economic resilience and build up that sort of strong bond with our neighbors. That's why we are, I push very aggressively the economic zone or the development in north of Malaysia and South of Thailand. But they will solve that the problem of both under

development and also potentially some issues with the Muslim in the South, we are trying to solve both.

Similarly, with Indonesia relations getting much better, Brunei, Philippines. So, I think that's what to my mind is reasonable, not to be too unrealistic in our hopes and aspirations.

## **Question 6**

### **Tarrence Tan, The Star**

**I have two questions for you. At this summit, ASEAN will launch the KL declaration on ASEAN 2025 and can you share with us what this declaration is about, and how significant is this for the future of the ASEAN region? And the second question, in light of the escalating tensions in Gaza and we saw UK and European countries are issuing strong statements. So, will ASEAN issue a strong statement on this as well? Thank you.**

### **Answer:**

Well, on the KL declaration, testing... we're testing with the full graph for that. No, I mean issue of governance, youth digital, issue of the future that I mean, we covered some of comprehensive or what need to be seen or to be expected in ASEAN. I think generally that of course, peace, security, these are, you know, clearly the preconditions.

But the team, both academic and researchers, the political leaders, the technocrats have worked very hard on this. We went through the draft in the last session, then there was a consensus and we proceed from that. But most of it is known, but at least there is a firm commitment. I think one of the early sub regional groups or regional groups that have now gone through. Not only the normal bias platitudes about peace, security, understanding, collaboration, but some specific areas.

And the second question, Gaza, there's some positive development that supposed to my mind really sickening. And the fact that when negotiations taking place was still being beaten, the bombings continue. I mean, as I've said... we have actually lost our humanity, world full of contradictions and Malaysia done whatever we can because some of us expect to do more. But within ASEAN, we have built that consensus initially, pause the fire and the humanitarian system as many countries do send support.

From the initial brief by the Foreign Minister just now, in the brief, I think there may be some passing reference, but not something concrete I see. But it would depend when I chair, for example, the retreat, leaders retreat probably certainly I would touch on this attack, but the ASEAN position was also made quite clear from last year, last two years.

**Question 7:**

**Zunaira Saieed, The New York Times**

**I wanted to ask you a question on you having engagements with business leaders of the semiconductor sector. What are they saying over the tariff? How are they feeling? Are they worried, scared? What's happening?**

**Answer:**

Well, they're very optimistic. I mean, AMD was here and you know, one of the biggest, and they were then in the discussions with Lisa Su, the CEO. (Why do I confuse with Ruth? And there's one thing we learned from my engagement with my wife — I go and message some girl's name — and I wanted to say Azizah and I said Hamidah). Now, it's interesting when she came in with that huge suggestion to expand operations here to Malaysia as the based, the AMD, at the time when the tariffs have been announced.

And of course, I am engaged with that. I asked her, I mean, what do you do this? She said "No, I don't see this will effect", because the base for semiconductor up here is too strong and has been there for the last six decades or more. And then even if they want to transfer immediate to United States, it would take time, you know, and they believe between three to five years, even if all some of the operations here to be brought back, they probably will suffer 20 percent of the operations.

So, it is benefiting United States companies as much as the economic interest here, because the investors are mainly from the United States anyway. In fact, I would name the company — they were pushing us to agree faster.

Now, I, in my response with Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul, I said “No, can we wait just one month more before the final decision is made by President Trump on the position?” They disagreed. They said no, they think we should proceed now.

It is some interesting development. Now, I’m not saying these to suggest that we should rest on our side and relax — no, we are really taking this matter very seriously. We understand that 60 percent of semiconductors are exported to the United States. It’s huge, and the middle action needs to be taken but notwithstanding the industry — NVIDIA, Microsoft, Google. Microsoft has wrote down the investment in some other countries, but in Malaysia, no, they are proceeding as planned.

This is what transpired in our series of engagements with that. So United States on semiconductors is the most positive. For now for example, it is excluded from the tariff right? But with due respect to the President, we don’t know what’s going to happen tomorrow, alright, or tonight. But for now it is quite safe.

But there’s some — like furniture. Furniture, our export was RM2 billion — so small. And then solar panels. Solar panels, they put the very high tariff, particularly in Chinese investment, but also huge in local and also United States with some of the investments — and our policy, we just said don’t wait. We said, look, our schools, our hospitals, our government buildings now should change to use the solar panels — whether it’s from China, but here local or from local companies.

So, I think we need to then, of course, depend to a large extent on what the final decision is going to be. But meanwhile, to build up the economic resilient. I mean, solar — we have been pushing, but now that we have that problem, it's better that we fast-track that or accelerate the process.

**Question:**

**But Datuk Seri, they are expanding here right, AMD?**

**Answer:**

Yes, they are expanding here. I mean, AMD is huge — new investments. Microsoft — an expansion. Google — all a new investment or expanding their operations here.

**Question:**

**What about like Intel and other companies? They — I mean, this is just an exception, right? AMD would be an exception or all the others are also kind of following the lead?**

**Answer:**

Well, I can't speak for all these companies — because independent-level operations, because some, of course, the back end. But now we are not terribly concerned about the first phase of something like the development — where this mainly the back end. Our focus now is at the front end. I mean, Infinion, AMD, are all new. In fact, for AMD, it's advanced

packaging, advanced design — it's no longer the one we used to have the last four or five decades.

I hope for the best. I mean, no one could be with such certainty suggest that everything will be alright. No. As you know, the gross protection may be somewhat affected, but realistically, this is what has transpired in our series of engagements. We've been very aggressive in the engagements, you know, and mainly, of course, by MITI — I'm cautiously optimistic. Yes, they'll be affected for example furniture, you know, because it's quite a problem — that's RM2 billion. Semiconductors — RM140 or RM160 billion. And for now, that has affected. So, we have to navigate this again. Solar for example billions ringgit but then, solar — something that we can compensate by this pushing our schools and hospitals and media offices to use solar. They are the most talking about alternative energy, and suddenly at the office semua tak pakai solar.

## **Question 8**

**Samer Allawi, Al Jazeera**

**Don't you think that there is a need to actually plan from these countries who are supporting humanity, who want to stop the killings in Palestine, who want to stop the starvation and famine?**

**We saw some little changes in Europe, and we noticed that and you mentioned that but there's no action plan, nobody's going to act especially those countries who are surrounding Palestine, and they are looking to be passive. They are not doing anything.**

## **Answer 8:**

Yeah, you're right. But I was in Kazan, and I raised the same issue, I did so in the little role that we had. We will do it/ But I'm very pleased at least now both president Xi Jinping, the Chinese maybe more assertive as well and the latest by President Macron but we are providing more action.

I mean, you can't be giving all these assurances or recognition when, on a daily basis, children and women are being killed. I mean, that is unfortunately a great human tragedy and a massive contradiction in this modern age when we talk about civilisation, or humanity, or human rights and you can go to these excesses.

## **Question 9**

### **Norman Goh from Nikkei Asia**

**2 weeks ago in Kazan, you raised about creating the ASEAN Monetary Fund. And two years ago, you've also raised about reducing the dependency and using local currencies. So, taking up this right in the incoming summit next week. So, in your opinion, what are some of the structural challenges that RCM must overcome to establish the functional Regional Monetary Fund? And how do you see Malaysia's role in this initiative?**

**And also second question is that with this Regional Monetary Fund, how will this help stabilize the RCM currencies against global financial?**

**Answer:**

Well, I did initiate talk about Asian Monetary Fund and ASEAN, but then the general consensus of course to enhance the capability of the Chiang Mai initiative, which precisely means a start in that direction using global currency. But, de-dollarization the present dollar is of course something unrealistic just to expect now, because dollar innovations remain to be too strong, too effective. And it is not a matter of dollar, it's a matter of having a level playing field using multilateral and financial infrastructure, you can ensure some form of minimum standard, they would guarantee fairness and justice, that's all. So, some people portrays NT dollar and not necessarily so. But, what have we achieved now with Thailand, with Indonesia as I've said in the past, even in Parliament, more than 20% of the total trade has been in the local currency. With the China 20% of \$1 trillion, I mean it's huge. It's has been, has it actually back to the second question, whether that could redeem, it's not known, but at least there is an effort we can gradually show that we are prepared to take some initiative to deal with this issue. I can see some awareness, I mean willingness. I think Vietnam, we have talked to Vietnam working towards it, but for now it's Indonesia, Thailand and China, of course.

**Question 10**

**Jasbant Singh from Media Prima**

**Can we have your thoughts about the tensions in South China Sea, especially between China and Philippines and will this be a priority discussion in the ASEAN Summit?**

**Answer:**

Now, we also have problems. But thus far in our negotiations, things are a bit stable. But the Chinese of course, have that red line they draw the red line and I think we should only be as a small emerging economy, do not attempt to be that admission to cross the red line unless we start buying about 50 submarines, then we may reconsider our position. But for now, realistically that the Chinese would have been very friendly, very accommodating and so we proceed to that, as far as I may concern.

With the Philippines, I admit things be more tensed because what is considered both parties, the red line can't be crossed. I have mentioned this to President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and President Bongbong Marcos, calling on that to say, there's no way out except to negotiate. But meanwhile to both parties to just withdraw from the red line. But in the last few weeks, things a little bit more cool as you say, more circumspect, but there's no immediate resolution. But one thing very positive, I know, as Bongbong Marcos we discussed it. He is unlike what is being perceived that is been very ready to discuss and not to escalate tensions. Similarly, my discussions with President Xi Jinping, there is similar. They want to make sure not only place but with the region to achieve a very conducive atmosphere and peaceful so that they can focus on working together.

**Question 11****Aqil Haziq Mahmud, Channel News Asia**

**Good evening, Dato' Sri, I am Aqil Haziq Mahmud from Channel News Asia. I just want to ask you about the ASEAN GCC China**

**Summit. First brought up the idea of inviting China when you went for official visit there last November, and now it's happening on Tuesday. What do you as ASEAN Chairman hope to achieve of this new summit, what kind of concrete deliverables, outcomes, what kind of potential do you see out of this new trilateral relationship? Is it kind of a new power triangle? Thank you.**

**Answer:**

No, for this out of question, there's no issue of power triangle. But the first we had this ASEAN GCC was also economically very vibrant, dynamic region in the Middle East.

Then we thought since they are coming here, it would be better if we could then get this sort of understanding, forge with understanding, but to focus, of course on multilateral trade, mechanisms and forge a better understanding, because all these countries have relationship with China too, and they're really focusing on ASEAN. So, I think I want to use this as an opportunity to get people, you know, look, let us build that consensus that we should work together.

And all these countries have excellent relations with the United States, too. I mean, the Middle East, it's GCC have extra. I mean should say that, you know, probably relatively better, closer links with United States. I think we should make use and they take a position now withstanding their position close to United States, they want to be closer to China too. I mean, so, in my

discussions with the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, Sheikh Zayed or Emir of Qatar, that seem to be the sentiment.

So, we thought that we should use this occasion to try and build up some, probably some projects that involve a few countries sub-regional, or not regional.

Today's probably fund so that we can work together. There has been discussions a bit premature for me to announce now because then the Foreign Ministers have to get their consensus first before they submit to the leaders for consideration.

But thus far, I sense that the ASEAN clearly is fully committed. We have engaged with the GCC and China too. Because when President Xi Jinping was here, he made very clear that he wants the Premier Li Qiang to attend and to support his agenda.

## **Question 12**

**Ashwad Ismail, Astro Awani**

**With regards to US, China rivalries and Malaysia and ASEAN navigates, this particular rivalry comes together as a tech war between the technology companies representing United States as well as China. And I think for example, our close relationship with both China and US. How do you navigate and how do you**

**foresee this most probably will be intensified in the next 1-2 years and navigating that this particular type of war?**

**Answer:**

I'm not saying it has gone problematic, no, because they engage with us. This so-called test rivalry between the United States and China is true. Sometimes it's been overly, I mean, exaggerated because there's some pragmatical generations that most leaders have, as you know, the structured measures, we don't know what's going to happen next week. I think of course, President Trump would of course make a decision or final decision. They would also guarantee the economic bibility of the United States.

Similarly, China would want to continue this sort of engagement, economic engagement with the United States because it is to become market both ways and huge investments either way. And so, I am cautiously optimistic, frankly, Not that we can play a role, people see we are navigating, and we say, no, not really. We take a position that we have to depend on both who benefit us and we just say why you see closer to China? Yeah, we are very close to China as compared to United States. I remember with Blinken at that time 'you are getting closer to China' and I say 'Secretary Blinken, we are close to China. I mean, I can't help you. It is there, closer. And then you have to give me a reason why politically, economically we cannot be closed.

So, I was very, I mean frank, I mean, and no way I intend to provoke him on this thing. So, I say, but our dependence to United States is clearly those trade investment is also huge. But what I can't accept is the tendency to

dictate. No, because I have a problem with you and therefore you must have a problem. You can't. You must allow for countries to decide in the interest of this particular country, the days of adimony, of new imperialism. They call those days in my younger days, a lot of new imperialism and new colonialism. Of course, not that extent, but those, you know, over the days of La Nacion Harlong Harlong, you see. So now it's a call for centeredness and independence. Well, in case for example, we have problems with China, but we don't seriously, because you know you don't have problems with China and South China Sea. I say of course we have, but then we have problems with Singapore, with Thailand, with the Philippines, with Vietnam, with Brunei, Indonesia. Why are you not picking these issues up where our problem is not a border issues. Is not only with China because all these countries as a marginalization. But how is it with all these problems that we have with Singapore? Our relation is at its best, we have excellent relation. Without that excellent relation, we can never make this economic zone successful. But we have, Johor-Singapore economic zone. I mean in terms of relationship with the two countries. This one unique experience, mind you, without exaggeration. But I think that the best we can do, we have assured clearly, I mean in my discussion with Steve Witkoff, I told him and Mat Hasan, Marco Rubio and Zafrul, we could give a consistent time. You know, and I think will be wise in the interest of our country, our people, our economic resilience. It is best to continue with this sort of policy.

### **Question 13**

**Thiagarajan Muthusamy, Vanakkam Malaysia**

Datuk Seri, what is Malaysia's position in non-tariff barriers in negotiation with the United States? Is there any sticking point in reaching mutual agreement with United States?

**Answer:**

Right now, of course, if you look at the general prescription for their issues right, in terms of domestic industries or companies, in terms of our, say, economic – Bumiputera policies but thus far, it has not brought up because our delegations members, including MITI, took care to explain – that countries must be allowed some space to navigate itself and transform this economy. Because anyway, like, for example, the ‘Washington Consensus’ those days or the ‘IMF prescriptions’, done without taking into account the problematic of each country – will have problems. So thus far, I’m not suggesting that there is none but from the initial negotiations, we don’t seem to see a serious problem.

**Question 14**

**Dato’ Kuik Cheng Kang, Media Chinese International Limited**

**First one related to what I should ask, did Malaysia really cancel our AI project with Huawei? What is the reason?**

**The second question did the ASEAN summit will discuss regional issues related with scammers too?**

**Answer:**

Number one, we have not been cancelled, but the announcement will be premature. Not cancel all decision is very clear with Ericsson and we have now the second network, their choice.

And for a country like Malaysia, not taking into account the skim issues and tensions with countries, particularly China or the EU or the United States which too much is best for our country.

And it's not true because I think the way the initial announcement was made is that, you know, there's so strong inclusive. The way to clarify is look, still in the midst of this negotiation because of the private sector I don't think it's for the government to announce.

But as a policy, we made very clear we are fiercely independent. We want what is best for our country, including AI, or technology, or technical communications. Right?

Scammer, yes, the issue of scammer has been discussed. There's been a series of meetings on this we had in Jakarta and Vientiane, and we are firm up on this connectivity, digitalization in the region and this connectivity digitalization focus in the earlier question on political decision of course to reduce the divide between countries.

And then, secondly, to deal with some of these problems relating to some security scammers, which is a real problem because they're also operating within it.

## **Question 15**

**Kathy Fong, The Edge**

**The question is about Sarawak issue. The government has actually signed the memorandum of joint declarations at Perdana Putra. You mentioned that it's understanding a method involving PETRONAS and PETROS. But, then the general perception is like, it seems that's not much of progress, is a decision should be made in October last year, but until now there's still no details of that. Would you be able to tell us more about that?**

**Another question is, coming to Media of the year soon. So, how's the economic reforms on the petrol service reservations, SST and electricity base terrified.**

### **Answer:**

On PETRONAS & PETROS you could block parameters have been announced, but of course, as they say, that was the details. So today we finalize this. You see, they accept the Petronas Act 1974, that's the national act. There's some extreme sight. Here the people who say no, PETROS has no place because PDA has been accepted as a national company and must serve the country as a whole. Well, similarly PETROS, he said no, it's

coming from Sarawak and therefore he must be entitled for Sarawak property. But, fortunately, both Central government, Federal government and Sarawak government takes a more reasoned position. For example, they accept the PDA and the Federal government take the Petronas, accept the DGO 2016 and the accompanying by laws. Which means PETROS now is the aggregator for Sarawak. I mean it's fairly produce. To me, it's not a problem. Oh, Anwar is brought major concession because otherwise they will withdraw support. I mean to be fair to GPS and the Premier. He has never been that unreasonable either in those ultimate term said no, we keep on negotiating and then and we leave it to PETRONAS and PETROS. But, there are problems here and there licensing.

You see PETRONAS will now allow PETROS to operate without having to consider the authority of VDA than before. At the same time, PETRONAS can continue the operations, the ongoing contractual obligations without question because there's been you have international agreements with the Korean, Japanese, American companies and you can't therefore shape midstream. But new operations and then what's important to Sarawak, which I think I believe is reasonable. They will require some facilities, gas for example, for the requirements of Sarawak. I mean, I really it is only fair for Sarawak government to ensure that the domestic supply or Sarawak requirements is guaranteed and it is what we have signed. And therefore the rest commercial discussion between them and we don't have the fear. I don't decide what pride, you know, that's for PETRONAS and PETROS. But, the consensus is critical because you see that, they have to work together. There's a national company, there's a state company, you work together. Both, one is owned by the federal state, one is owned by the federal. So I need to represent not only from Semenanjung of Malaysia, but also the interest of Sarawak. So, I think of course, it becomes a major country, some form of controversy.

But I do think we should entertain that the moderate path to be that you know, it's not it's not zero sum is win win situation. I answered the questions. Ok. Is it alright? You see the details not actually, I don't know. We did circulate the terms of the agreement or the understanding and the broad parameters. But of course, which area done some about Kashawali. You asked me I wouldn't know the details, but the principles are clear and I think both PETRONAS and PETROS will be given clear message. Now we don't want you to take a position that would frustrate any new deals. We have experience because of this law protected negotiations that we had Conoco Phillips, you know, uncertain to proceed we can't afford that. So, I'm thank PETRONAS, but also Premier Abang Johari and that draws in the Sarawak for this ending this episode and then moving on as a team.

## **Question 16**

### **Aradhana Takhtani, The Times of India**

**I have a very interesting question about Malaysia MADANI. So, the domestic audience, they know what is the keystones of this ethos that you are running your government with. Now with ASEAN at the center and all eyes on ASEAN and traders and summit, will you be upscaling this thought into the ASEAN as the chairman of ASEAN and in your summits thereafter in this whole year? And what are the two or three key points of the MADANI that you will bring on to the stage.**

**Answer:**

Prime Minister Modi met me in Brazil after my visits. He says “Anwar bhai, your Dost Dost Na Raha was viral in India”. Is that true? This is a beautiful classical song that I memorize without fully understanding the meaning. Listen, I come from Penang, we sing Chinese song, Tamil song, Hindi songs, of course Malay songs we memorize, not a problem. Now people are quite sensitive. In those days we grew up like this and course, in Hokkien we say some very nasty words without understanding the meaning. Now, of course I’m not extending my principle role beyond this MADANI National Framework.

But my colleagues in ASEAN know that everywhere I go I will mention it partly to be kind to your brother or friend. You see, you know, when it comes to MADANI Framework. MADANI, was is the difference? Of course, we talk about economic sustainability or the new technology, but what I believe is lacking in the realm of governance and politics, the issue of values, the issue of human dignity. We talk about majority of conflicts, racism, class divide, any form of corruption and oppression, even because we have lost that humanity. And I believe, I’m not a dreamer. I know the limitations. I have issues too, even in governance, I’m not able to deal with all these issues and solve all the problems.

But at least we should inculcate that understanding that we talk about growth, we talk about development, we talk about human beings and in the multiracial or multi-religious country like Malaysia, however difficult, you know, people are still cynical. I’m not doing enough for the Malays, I’m not doing enough for the Indians or enough for the Chinese or Sarawak and Sabah. They will continue. But at least you inculcate this and we look, we are one people, one humanity and you must have that love and compassion. And I think that’s essentially element that I believe I may be wrong is

lacking in the world of politics. People talk of civilization and human dignity. Just like, you know, either go policies, ideology and all you know, and that has been the floor. Well, many of my friends say, “Anwar I think you to go back to the university and not become a Prime Minister.” To go back and teach. I said even as a Prime Minister I’m teaching, here’s some my lectures. Some get tired but then I will try. Ok, Namaskar.

### **Question 17**

**Eileen Ng, AP**

**Sir, just want to ask about the two key issues that are really testing ASEAN’s unity and credibility, which is the issue of Myanmar and South China Sea.**

**Well, I know that you cannot solve the problems of the world realistically. What are your expectations at the end of your championship? What do you hope to see? At least, how? How do you expect to move the needle on these two issues?**

**Answer:**

One thing politicians should never give money away. Well, I’m very confident, I can trust. By the way, the two issues, to me there’s a suddenly remarkable progress. Myanmar, for example, we are able to engage with all parties, number one. We are able to secure ceasefire, number two and number three, we are able to ensure that all humanitarian aid can go to any sub-region control by any group, the three groups now.

So, thus far to me is a good beginning. And then we instill on that broad parameters of the five-point consensus, to say, look, we have everything to lose. You don't grasp and use this opportunity to come back and work together.

You know, it's interesting, you know, when I consulted all my colleague, nine of them from Sultan Brunei to Bongbong Marcos and the Parlani of Vietnam, and I mean, Prabowo, Lawrence, none of them say you want to be cautious and careful. No, all say that good, good. Use this as a great opportunity to engage with all of them, number one.

And then when I return back to Kuala Lumpur, I call them again. He said, look, use all your channels and your intelligence services or whatever, your e-mail to continue to give the same message. And then, well, they have not announced, but recently there have been, you know, initiatives by Malaysia, for example, calling all the groups and quietly, you know, discussing informally for a start. We do engage in separately, but I think it's time for them to talk. I mean, the people in Myanmar have to decide for themselves. We don't put some strict and you must be democracy by next year and then the election should be this way. I'm not sure which country can teach a proper how to conduct proper elections.

So, let them decide. But what is important against human dignity. You must stop killing people or burning their houses. That is, I mean, not go for me. I mean, I've said it very clearly. I see, I know that you consider civil war, you're going to the other perspective, but careful with the women and children are being killed. So, to me that is remarkable heat indeed in terms of the ASEAN history.

So, those coming after Bongbong Marcos is following very closely and say you move beyond that move or you know, the first serious attendant engagement has happened and we have to move beyond that now.

On the South China Sea, we still have these problems, but I don't see how and why should we exploit that's a major problem.

Accepting that I recognised. Accepting for the Philippines. Maybe the Philippines with the criteria was silent and the Bongbong Marcos have been really very guarded, cautious. Sometimes they exploit when they come back and then continue to try and engage either directly and through third party. It is continuing. Has it escalated to a situation where it is potentially very explosive? No, as it proceeded to extend that is no possibility of talks and negotiations like Ukraine, Russia, no. It's far from there. So, I think what we need to do even with an ASEAN and particularly with ASEAN and China to make sure that this engagement, if not formally or even informally continue.

So, terima kasih banyak for your education, it's a remarkable, program, very kind. Those days they were, you were more kind because I was opposition that everybody's pathetic. Then went I become Prime Minister, semua tidak betul (nada berseloroh) and you know, you're not big enough, you know, why we need to reform, right now before my judiciary date. So, yeah, it's true. It's this more challenging in the sense high expectation. I can't blame them. They were joking. I can joke a bit. Yeah, they're joking about the Party Congress in the next few days. You didn't ask?

I'm telling you. You see, there's a trouble. You listen to nation. My staff should never listen to them. Choose right. Whom do you support? then I said, why? I was in Langkawi, why you get to this work together and then you know what one of them said "lawan tetap lawan!" because the motto all those decade you must go on and fight and never surrender. You see, we fight now, but you don't fight against me, you know. So, okay, when I go down sometime, I say, "hey, sabar sikit, give me time". We just don't have yet. You're trying to try tender. No direct award or negotiated tender. We're taking action. Oh, but you know, you're not charging them far. Go to the process. No, but they haven't been detained yet. Yes, for the court. Not for me to put anybody in jail, you know. And then went I said "no, you have to be patient. Go to the.." "No, they said, lawan tetap lawan". So, how do I blame them? For years you've been teaching them to fight.

Terima kasih banyak.

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