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AMID GLOBAL UNCERTAINTY

'KL DECLARATION KEY TO ASEAN RESILIENCE'

It recognises that energy and food security are now strategic priorities, says Anwar



THE Kuala Lumpur Declaration, adopted by Asean last year, must serve as a foundation to strengthening the region's economic resilience, energy security and supply chain stability amid ongoing global uncertainty.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Asean should build on the momentum of the declaration, which reaffirms collective commitments to strategic autonomy, economic resilience and sustainable growth.

In his address at the 48th Asean Summit plenary session here yesterday, Anwar said the declaration underscored that certain matters had become strategic priorities for the bloc.

"The declaration recognises that energy security, food resilience, supply chain stability and stronger regional connectivity are now strategic priorities, not merely sectoral concerns."

On energy security, he said

Malaysia supported efforts to accelerate the implementation of the Asean Petroleum Security Agreement framework, amid declining domestic oil and gas production in the region.

Anwar said Asean must also diversify fossil fuel sources and reduce over-reliance on vulnerable supply chains.

He added: "We recognise that strategic partnerships with trusted partners and regional groupings can strengthen Asean's long-term energy security."

Anwar also encouraged deeper engagement with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), including broader Asean-GCC-China linkages, to build a more resilient regional energy architecture.

He said the Asean Power Grid remained a crucial pillar of the region's energy transition and long-term security, calling for increased investment to accelerate cross-border connectivity and support low-carbon growth.

The prime minister said the ongoing energy crisis was already exerting pressure on food systems across the region, driving up the cost of fertiliser, transportation and production.

In view of these challenges, Anwar proposed that Asean establish a regional food security plan to better prepare for global disruptions that could affect supply chains and price stability.

He said mechanisms for regional food stockpiling during crises should be immediately explored to improve coordination and emergency response.

"Food security must be treated as a regional strategic priority," he said, warning that continued global instability could lead to reduced food production and prolonged inflationary pressures in the region.

Anwar also called for strengthening the Asean Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve mechanism, including the possibility of expanding its scope beyond rice to include fertiliser security.

Meanwhile, he said escalating tensions in the Middle East served as a reminder of Asean's shared responsibility to safeguard its citizens abroad.

In this regard, Anwar said Asean must enhance information-sharing, consular cooperation and emergency response mechanisms.