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**PETALING JAYA:** Malaysia achieved its highest-ever trade performance last year, with total trade hitting RM3.061 trillion, a 6.3% increase from 2024, announced Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

Answering a question from Petaling Jaya MP Lee Chean Chung, Anwar said Malaysia's export sales reached RM1.63 trillion, driven by trade with countries including the United Kingdom, Thailand, Russia, Italy, France, Brazil, China, South Korea, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa.

"Exports were largely dominated by liquefied natural gas, palm oil, electrical and electronic products, especially semiconductors, aerospace products, furniture, and other manufactured goods."

Anwar credited Malaysia's record trade performance to its open trade policy, which spans 240 markets worldwide, despite global economic headwinds, including US-imposed measures and international political tensions.

The country also recorded a trade surplus of RM151.8 billion, up 9.2% from 2024, reflecting robust external demand.

Highlighting emerging markets, Anwar pointed to rapid growth in nations such as Kyrgyzstan, Yemen, Tanzania, Togo, Uzbekistan, Angola, Algeria, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, Kenya and Morocco.

"These new markets present opportunities to expand trade in a more open and inclusive manner," he said.

During the session, Lee raised investor concerns over high costs and bureaucratic hurdles from utility providers such as Tenaga Nasional Berhad and Indah Water Konsortium, including charges on substation projects and contributions tied to investment value.

In response, Anwar said the government would review these costs to ensure they remain reasonable, adding that utility providers act as facilitators rather than obstacles to foreign investment.

"While our trade performance is encouraging, we must remain open to reducing service costs where necessary. This matter will receive special attention from the relevant ministry."