Malaysian prime minister slams Meta after Facebook removes post on Hamas's Haniyeh

Doha, August 2 (RHC)-- Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has accused Meta of "cowardice" after the social media company removed his Facebook post on the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

Malaysia is a supporter of the Palestinian cause, and Anwar has repeatedly condemned Israel's war on Gaza and its actions in the occupied West Bank. Following Haniyeh's killing in Iran, the Malaysian leader posted a video recording of his phone call with a Hamas official to offer condolences, which was later removed by the company owned by US billionaire Mark Zuckerberg.

A similar post published on Anwar's Instagram account was also removed by Meta, which owns the photo and video-sharing social media application. "Let this serve as a clear and unequivocal message to Meta: cease this display of cowardice and stop acting as instruments of the oppressive Zionist Israeli regime," Anwar was quoted as saying by state news agency Bernama on Thursday.

The removal of the posts was accompanied by the caption, "Dangerous individuals and organizations."

Anwar, who met Haniyeh in Qatar in May, has said he has good relations with the Hamas political leadership but no links on a military level. Haniyeh had also visited Malaysia over the years as the political leader of Hamas.

There was no immediate response from Meta.

Malaysia's Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil said an explanation had been sought from Meta and it was unclear whether the posts were automatically removed, or taken down following a complaint.

Meta has designated Hamas, the Palestinian movement that governs Gaza, as a "dangerous organization" and bans content praising the group. It also uses a mix of automated detection and human review to remove or label graphic visuals.

Malaysia has previously complained to Meta over its takedown of content, including the media coverage of Anwar's last meeting with Haniyeh, which was later restored.   Meta at the time said it was not deliberately suppressing voices on Facebook and was not restricting content supporting Palestinians.

Malaysia has long advocated a two-state solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

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