

**PM ANWAR BOOSTS SPIRITS OF HARIMAU MALAYA SQUAD FOR ASIAN CUP  
DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 4 (Bernama) — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has extended his best wishes to the Harimau Malaya squad under the guidance of Kim Pan Gon, who are set to face a gruelling challenge in the 2023 Asian Cup in Doha, Qatar from Jan 12 to Feb 10.

In a video message on his official Facebook page tonight, Anwar hailed them as warriors for ending Malaysia's 42-year wait to qualify for the Asian Cup on merit and represent the country in Doha.

"These are great warriors, the Harimau Malaya team – fighting with patience, strong spirits and dedication. After 42 years of waiting, and now, they rise as warriors and fight. We pray, God willing, that you will achieve success.

"Once again, good luck to the Harimau Malaya team in their matches," he said.

Malaysia, drawn in Group E, will begin their campaign by playing Jordan on Jan 15 (Jan 16, 1.30 am Malaysian time) at the Al Janoub Stadium, followed by a match against Bahrain on Jan 20 at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium and an encounter with two-time champions South Korea at the Al Janoub Stadium on Jan 25.

Only the champions and runners-up of each group, along with the four best third-placed teams, will qualify for the Round of 16, a stage the national team failed to reach in their three previous appearances.

This marks Malaysia's fourth participation in the Asian Cup after qualifying on merit in the 1976 edition in Iran and the 1980 edition in Kuwait, as well as hosting the tournament jointly in 2007.

Pan Gon's team, who arrived in Doha on Jan 1, are scheduled to face Syria in an international friendly match on Jan 8.

Follow the latest news and updates on the 2023 Asian Cup at [asiancup.bernama.com](http://asiancup.bernama.com).

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