

## **Hope for Asean Summit to address climate change, digitalization**

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**Bernama**

Ahead of the 46th Asean Summit, set to take place in just a few days, many Malaysians are hopeful that key issues, such as climate change, the digitalisation gap, and food security, will be prioritised.

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) corporate strategy and relations centre officer, Noor Eszereen Juferi, 44, said this is in line with Asean's commitment to building a more inclusive and sustainable region.

"Climate change and the digital divide, particularly affecting rural communities, remain ongoing challenges. I hope Malaysia will take a wise and proactive role in enhancing regional cooperation on food security, addressing the climate crisis, and driving digital empowerment," she told Bernama.

She also expressed hope that the summit would further address economic and employment opportunities for the region's younger generation, particularly through initiatives in education, tourism, and talent development.

Sharing a similar view, Angel Ng, 42, said Asean should fully harness its abundant resources and rich cultural diversity to promote tourism and generate regional economic benefits.

She said this could be achieved through Asean solidarity, where member countries support one another in overcoming challenges.

“Together, we can build a stronger, greener, and more united Asean,” said the civil servant.

Meanwhile, Roznah Abdul Jabbar, 44, shared that it would be ideal if the disparities between Asean member states across various sectors could be narrowed, ensuring that prosperity, development, and security are enjoyed collectively.

She emphasised that strong cooperation among Asean members to achieve political stability, as well as increase trade and promote regional tourism, must be strengthened, as these efforts have proven effective in driving economic growth.

“As a Malaysian, I hope to see more business and investment opportunities emerging from a wider consumer market and a more diverse economy, along with greater travel prospects, not only for leisure but also for career and

employment opportunities,” she said.

For Lacey Elizabeth Stanely, 44, it is crucial for Asean countries to work hand in hand to improve economic conditions, mobility, education, regional stability, and access to diverse opportunities that can foster long-term growth and cooperation.

“I hope to see Asean this year and beyond as a region with a stronger spirit of regional unity and integration, resilient and inclusive economic growth, digital transformation and innovation, sustainable development and comprehensive climate action,” said the senior fire officer.

She added that enhancing health cooperation, strengthening pandemic preparedness, and ensuring Asean remains people-centred are equally important so that people at all levels of society can experience the benefits of regional integration.

The 46th Asean Summit will begin with the senior officials meeting on May 23, followed by a ministerial meeting on May 25, while the heads of government meeting will begin on May 26.

The theme, “Inclusivity and Sustainability”, is raised as a unifying basis for regional and global engagement.

Malaysia's commitment is to strengthen Asean centrality, foster economic cooperation, and champion the principles of inclusivity and sustainability.

- Bernama

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