

# 'KL, Jakarta to forge stronger ties'

## PM: Together we must revitalise trade and investment, especially now

**JAKARTA:** Efforts will be intensified to revitalise trade and investment between Malaysia and Indonesia during this Covid-19 pandemic period, says the Prime Minister.

"Preliminary discussions have started at the working level. I hope both sides can step up talks to work out the standard operating procedure (SOP) for the implementation of the Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL) scheme," said Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said that further enhancing Kuala Lumpur-Jakarta ties to a strategic level would enable the two countries to optimise their existing cooperation, especially in economy, trade and investment.

The Prime Minister, who was on an official visit to Indonesia, said the strengthening of cooperation reflected the determination of the two leaders to work together for the mutual prosperity of the close neighbours.

"In this connection, we have given the mandate to both our foreign ministers to identify strategic fields which can be given priority," he said at a joint news conference with Indonesian President Joko Widodo after they held a four-eye meeting at Istana Merdeka here yesterday.

He expressed satisfaction with the fact that bilateral ties had strengthened at all levels.

On the anti-palm oil campaign, especially in Europe, Australia and Oceania, Muhyiddin said Indonesia and Malaysia, as the two biggest producers of the commodity, would continue to cooperate in tackling this issue of discrimination.

"This is to ensure that we can



**Meeting of leaders:** Jokowi and Muhyiddin (right) inspecting a guard of honour at the presidential palace in Jakarta. — AFP

protect the palm oil industry, especially the millions of smallholders whose livelihoods are fully dependent on this industry in Malaysia and Indonesia," he added.

On Myanmar, Muhyiddin said Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta viewed with serious concern the current political situation in the country as it was a setback for its democratic process.

"It is feared that the political

upheaval in Myanmar can affect peace and stability in this region.

"In this regard, I fully agree with the suggestion that both foreign ministers be given the mandate to work out an understanding for a special Asean meeting to be held to discuss this matter more thoroughly," the Prime Minister said.

The one-on-one meeting also touched on environmental cooperation, including the issues of climate

change and transboundary haze affecting the two countries.

Muhyiddin said that through this cooperation, the relevant agencies in both countries could share the best available practices in farm and peat soil management.

Apart from this, he added, the two ministries concerned would also set up a focal point to facilitate communication on environmental issues, including transboundary haze.

The meeting also discussed matters on the recruitment of Indonesian manpower and domestic helpers as well as initiatives to safeguard the welfare and well-being of Malaysian and Indonesian fishermen operating in areas with maritime issues.

Although his visit to Indonesia was less than 24 hours, Muhyiddin has described it as very successful.

"Although it was a short trip, it provided many benefits to both countries," he told a press conference at the end of his visit.

Muhyiddin arrived here on Thursday.

The short visit was done by taking into account the current pandemic as well as in strict compliance with the standard operating procedure.

He said many issues were discussed during the one-hour face-to-face meeting with Joko, more commonly known as Jokowi, and they arrived at a mutual agreement.

"An understanding was forged. The body language of the president was very friendly. So much so he (Jokowi) said that if there is anything, it's all right to even call him up every day," said Muhyiddin.

The Prime Minister said the results of the face-to-face meeting might have been difficult to achieve had it been carried out virtually.

"I can feel the warmth of the relationship with the president while chatting, walking... even though we did not shake hands," said Muhyiddin. — Bernama

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