

# PM on UAE ties: 'The sky's the limit'

## Both nations to work closely in trade, investments and education

**ABU DHABI:** In an unprecedented move, Abu Dhabi confirms "the sky's the limit" for its cooperation with Kuala Lumpur.

Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said this was conveyed to him by Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi who is also Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, during their meeting on Wednesday.

"(The phrase) 'the sky is the limit' was used by the Crown Prince when referring to the cooperation between the two countries," said Muhyiddin yesterday.

The Crown Prince also described the ties of the two countries as close and extraordinary, he added.

The Prime Minister said the bilateral trade between both nations was set to be increased five-fold in value from the current US\$3bil (RM12bil).

"During the discussion, I also mentioned our bilateral trade needs to be increased and the Crown Prince responded: Agreed five times," he said.

Muhyiddin said UAE also wished to increase its investment in Malaysia which was US\$1.6bil at the moment.

"UAE has not set the timeframe for the increase in trade and investment in Malaysia and we must act fast," Muhyiddin told the Malaysian media at the end of his two-day official visit to the Emirates.

The Prime Minister said that during the meeting, he also shared with



**Fruitful meeting:** Muhyiddin (left) speaking to Sheikh Mohammed at Zabeel Palace in Abu Dhabi. - Bernama

the Crown Prince his plan to implement digital education for all six million Malaysian students.

"To my surprise, the Crown Prince said, 'consider it done' and I was stunned. I'm not sure about the cost.

"It could be around RM3bil to RM4bil as it involves gadgets, content, software and ecosystem.

"I feel relieved that the plan can materialise with some assistance

from the Crown Prince. Education is close to the Crown Prince's heart," he said.

Muhyiddin said the increase in trade and investment from UAE in Malaysia would certainly benefit the country and Malaysians through the creation of more business and job opportunities.

He said he would probably form a committee or task force to ensure the implementation of the outcome

of the meeting.

"We can't wait and see. We need to act fast.

"We need to identify areas of trade and investment, for example, infrastructure, transportation and plantation, and whether it involves the government, GLC (government-linked companies) or private sector and put forward the proposal to them," he said.

Muhyiddin also said UAE was

keen to learn from Malaysia the way Kuala Lumpur assists small and medium enterprises impacted by Covid-19.

He said both countries also agreed to establish food security diplomacy cooperation in ensuring enough food supply in the event of any untoward crisis in the future.

Muhyiddin said there would be a food security hub in Kuala Lumpur and Abu Dhabi respectively and the initiative would encourage the development of the food industry in Malaysia.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the establishment of Food Security Diplomacy Cooperation between the two countries was also inked during the visit.

Two other MOUs were also sealed concerning the establishment of UAE's founding father Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan Chair at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies as well as on cooperation in the field of training of diplomats.

Muhyiddin also met with Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai in Dubai on Wednesday.

Earlier this week, Muhyiddin made an official visit to Saudi Arabia. Similar to his official visit to the Kingdom, his visit to the UAE was also undertaken with strict adherence to Covid-19 standard operating procedure.

The Prime Minister departed for home yesterday. — Bernama