

# Anwar's official visit to Thailand explores new collaborations

**PUTRAJAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim will undertake his maiden two-day official visit to Thailand starting today where he will hold a meeting with Thai counterpart Prayut Chan-o-cha to discuss the way forward in strengthening the multifaceted cooperation between Malaysia and Thailand.

In a statement, Wisma Putra said Anwar's visit to Thailand after being sworn in as the 10th Prime Minister of Malaysia is at the invitation of Prayut.

"The meeting will provide an

opportunity for the two leaders to discuss the way forward in strengthening their multifaceted cooperation. Focus areas include economic cooperation, border area development, and key connectivity projects crossing the land borders," it said.

The two leaders will witness the exchange of four Memoranda of Understanding in the fields of energy cooperation and the digital economy.

"Both leaders will also be exchanging views on regional and international issues of mutual concern. The visit reflects the close and

long-standing bilateral ties between Malaysia and Thailand, built upon mutual trust and partnership.

"The close relationship has benefited people on both sides as a result of broad-ranging cooperation in various sectors, most notably cross-border cooperation," it said.

Anwar is also scheduled to hold an engagement with the Malaysian diaspora in Bangkok.

He will be accompanied by his wife Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail and the Malaysian delegation, which includes Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd

Kadir, Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, and officials from the relevant ministries and agencies,

Last year, Thailand was Malaysia's seventh largest trading partner globally and the third largest among Asean countries, with total trade amounting to RM122bil, an increase of 17.9% compared to the recorded value in 2021.

Meanwhile, Anwar's visit to Thailand is expected to rekindle peace talks in the south, "which he

has always been keen on," according to Dr Rahul Mishra, director of the Centre of Asean Regionalism at Universiti Malaya.

He said the new Malaysian chief facilitator Tan Sri Zulkifli Zainal Abidin would be able to make a breakthrough in the decade-long peace process.

"It is not an easy task; however, it is a positive sign that the current government is interested in the peace process and keen to work with the Thai government and separatist groups," said Rahul. — Bernama