



Indonesia President Joko Widodo accompanying Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to inspect an honour guard as part of a welcoming ceremony at Istana Bogor, near Jakarta, yesterday. AP PIC

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

KL, JAKARTA PLEDGE TO BOOST TIES

Both countries also vow to resolve thorny issues, such as labour and border matters

JAKARTA

KUALA Lumpur and Jakarta have renewed their commitment to not only strengthen bilateral relations, but also pledged to resolve thorny issues between them.

Malaysia, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said, would not allow any of these issues to fester and risk affecting the two countries' healthy relations.

At a session in Istana Bogor today where both Anwar and Indonesian President Joko Widodo, affectionately known as Jokowi, issued a joint-statement, the prime minister told the Indonesian president that he would do his best to resolve issues that were of concern to Jakarta.

Among the matters Jokowi had underlined in his statement were the welfare and treatment of Indonesian workers in Malaysia, education opportunities for the



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country's young and border demarcation issues.

Anwar said, as Jokowi gave him a look of confidence, that Kuala Lumpur would work closely with Jakarta to ensure the recruitment of Indonesian workers would be only through legal channels.

Jokowi had asked for Anwar's political will to formalise a one-stop recruitment centre for his countrymen seeking work in Malaysia.

In further cementing the Kuala Lumpur-Jakarta relationship, which is in its 66th year, Anwar said economic and investment opportunities were set to soar, more so with the republic shifting its capital to Nusantara in Indonesia's part of Borneo.

Both leaders at the session witnessed the handover of 11 letters of intent between International Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul

Aziz and Nusantara chief authority Bambang Susantono.

This involves an initial value of some RM1 billion.

Malaysia and Indonesia's strategic economic and investment partnership registered a bilateral trade value of at least RM120.26 billion last year.

This was an increase of 41.7 per cent from the year before.

Jokowi said Jakarta welcomed Malaysian companies' participation in Nusantara, especially in areas like construction, properties, electronics and energy.

"I am also personally honoured that Indonesia is the first stop (of Anwar as prime minister).

"I believe that with our strong relationship our bilateral ties will be even stronger," the president said, adding that he hoped Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta could together counter discrimination against their oil palm industries.

Anwar is on a two-day working visit to Indonesia, accompanied by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari and Malaysian Embassy Charge d' Affaires Adlan Mohd Shaffieq.

His wife, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, was also part of the Malaysian delegation.