

PM: TIME TO EXPLORE HUGE POTENTIAL

Anwar urges both nations' business communities to take steps to boost investment, trade

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MALAYSIA and the Philippines must boost their already rising investment and trade values, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim. He said there has been a slight increase in investment and trade for both countries, but there was huge potential that they must explore.

"With the strength of the economy in the Philippines and Malaysia, the business communities (of both countries) should interact more and jointly take measures to enhance bilateral and economic relations, while re-suscitating our economy post-Covid-19.

"We also take note that there has been phenomenal progress in the Philippines post-Covid under your leadership (Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr) and

certainly, we should use this to enhance the collaboration," Anwar said during a joint press conference with Marcos Jr in conjunction with the latter's state visit to Malaysia.

The joint press conference was aired live on RTM.

Anwar said among other matters discussed during bilateral talks was the potential of halal industries for both countries.

"We certainly do our utmost in terms of certification, but we should jointly undertake some effective measures to ensure that the halal industry can penetrate more effectively into the Middle Eastern market, in particular.

"We touched on Myanmar, to strengthen the Five-Point Consensus of Asean.

"(But) at the same time, some flexibility, room and space must be given for the neighbouring countries to engage on an informal basis without sacrificing the issue of human rights and the treatment of minorities, in particular the Rohingya."

He added that the Malaysia-Philippines Joint Commission Meeting, which will convene later this year, was also discussed.



Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

"We have outstanding MoUs, in which both of us have agreed to accelerate the process, and we should find ways to resolve and hopefully sign prior or during the meeting."

Meanwhile, Marcos Jr said the meeting, scheduled in October, would provide government agencies an avenue to discuss priority collab-

oration in detail, especially in the areas on transnational crime, agriculture, halal industry, Islamic banking, education, tourism, culture, sports and the digital economy.

"We will continue to work on the corresponding MoUs in these fields and will have them signed in the future."

He added that both governments were committed to closely coordinating efforts to build capacity in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in southern Philippines, especially in the halal, Islamic banking and food security sectors.

"Malaysia has warmly offered their expertise to train Philippine personnel and officials to strengthen our capabilities in these increasingly important sectors."