



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim is welcomed by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen at a press conference in Phnom Penh yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

STRENGTHENING TIES

MALAYSIA, CAMBODIA TO BOOST COOPERATION

Trade, investment the priority as govt seeks to enhance links with Phnom Penh, says Anwar

PHNOM PENH

MALAYSIA and Cambodia are looking forward to enhancing cooperation in investment, halal industry, digital technology, education and defence, to strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said these issues were among the priorities raised during a bilateral meeting held at the Peace Palace here yesterday.

"Discussions were very elaborate and comprehensive... touching on issues of trade and investments, which happen to be our priority in our bilateral relations as well as some other concerns," he said in a joint press conference with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen during his one-day official visit to Cambodia.

Earlier, Anwar and Hun Sen witnessed the signing of two memoranda of understanding (MoU) between the Malaysian

and Cambodian governments.

One of the MoUs is on the recruitment, employment and repatriation of Cambodian workers in the domestic and formal sectors to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the labour sector.

Regarding the halal industry, the prime minister said Malaysia was quite advanced on the matter and would give the opportunity to Cambodia to use its facilities in order to encourage and facilitate exports to Muslim countries, particularly the Middle East.

Anwar also spoke of the success of rice production in Cambodia, and said he would encourage Malaysian rice companies to import rice and cashew nuts from the country.

"The (Cambodian) prime minister mentioned the success of rice production, which is something commendable with surplus production.

"I know for a fact that rice production is not something easy but you have managed to increase productivity," he said.

Both countries, according to Anwar, also agreed to develop bamboo resources in Cambodia by getting investors to help in processing and exporting it.

"You (Hun Sen) have mentioned the issue of the need to continue training, other than government-to-government mat-

ters, like defence and technical expertise and administration.

"On digital technology and education, we will, of course, be able to work together once a joint committee sits down, hopefully by the end of the year. I think it is Malaysia's turn to host after a lapse (of) so many years," he added.

Meanwhile, Anwar said he had expressed appreciation to Hun Sen for his support in bringing back Malaysian victims of a job scam syndicate in Cambodia.

Describing Hun Sen's leadership as "outstanding" in giving full support and collaboration in resolving the job scam issue, he said Cambodia was one of the countries most forthcoming and helpful in dealing with the issue.

"(This) job scam issue also affects your citizens, but you were helpful in assisting us to bring back 287 Malaysian victims of a job scam.

"Thank you very much. It means a lot to hundreds of families affected by this scam," he said.

The Foreign Ministry had said it received 572 reports involving Malaysians who were victims of job scam syndicates abroad, as of Feb 20, 2023.

The reports were received through the Malaysian embassies in Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Vientiane and Yangon. **Bernama**