

# Summit a success, says PM

## 'Various forms of concrete cooperation proves Asean is still strong'

**LABUAN BAJO (Indonesia):** The 42nd Asean Summit was very meaningful as member countries succeeded in strengthening regional cooperation, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said this included cooperation in the fields of economy, electric car ecosystem, conducting trade through the use of local currencies and inter-country digital payments to make Asean stronger.

The various forms of concrete cooperation proved that Asean was still strong although certain quarters had the perception that the regional bloc was quite weak in tackling current challenges, he told Malaysian journalists at the close of the summit here yesterday.

According to Anwar, Asean leaders also agreed to ensure that the Asean Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP) remained the main mechanism for managing relations among countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

He said AOIP was more balanced and gave priority to region-



**Having a light moment:** Anwar speaking to Indonesian President Joko Widodo prior to the 15th Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle Summit on the sidelines of the Asean Summit in Labuan Bajo. - AP

al security, stability and prosperity, apart from promoting open, inclusive and more sustainable cooperation.

"The leaders have agreed to consolidate their stand and defend the position of Asean as a free zone and avoid getting

involved in big power rivalries," he added.

Anwar said his call for the establishment of an Asian Monetary Fund to strengthen the region's economy and security network had received a positive response from the various governments.

However, there was no special discussion on the proposal which was still at the early stage, he added.

On the Myanmar issue, he said the regional leaders had agreed to defend the Five-Point Consensus (5PC) principle in resolving the controversial and complicated conflict as well as managing humanitarian assistance.

Anwar said the resolution method adopted was based on international principles and negotiations with all interested parties in Myanmar to promote progress in the implementation of 5PC.

"Our stand is clearer because any delay in settling the Myanmar issue will burden the Rohingya ethnic group and also Malaysia, which has been saddled with more than 200,000 refugees," he said. — Bernama