

Bangkok thanks KL for helping free Thai hostages held by Hamas

BUKIT KAYU HITAM: Thailand has thanked Malaysia for assisting in the safe release of Thai nationals held captive by Hamas, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said his Thai counterpart Srettha Thavisin had expressed gratitude over the matter.

“He expressed his appreciation to Malaysia for our help to secure the release of its hostages held by Hamas during the outbreak of the recent Palestine-Israel conflict.

“I said we have done our best to help but it was the wisdom of Hamas, with the help of Egypt which opened its border that secured the safe release of the Thai nationals,” said Anwar during a press conference at the Immigration, Customs, Quarantine and Security (ICQS) Complex here yesterday.

It was earlier reported that three more Thais held by Hamas were released from Gaza on Sunday, taking to 17 the number

of Thai nationals freed since the four-day truce began last Friday.

Anwar was on a working visit to Thailand to discuss bilateral cooperation with his counterpart Srettha.

He said both leaders also spoke on their earlier agreement to form several task forces to boost existing ties.

He said these included task forces on tourism, trade, food security and agriculture as well as border security issues.

On the construction of a second bridge on Sungai Golok-Rantau Panjang, Anwar said it would be implemented next year once the Environmental Impact Assessment approval was secured.

“During the meeting, he touched on illegal poaching. We agreed to increase enforcement and work together to prevent illegal hunting, not just of tigers but all wildlife,” he said.

“When we spoke about the efforts to enhance cooperation in

the halal industry for both countries, I shared that Malaysia has strength in terms of halal certification, which is recognised worldwide, while Thailand has an advantage in food production,” he said.

Anwar said their meeting also focused on the growth as well as construction and enhancement of activities around the Bukit Kayu Hitam-Sadao border that would benefit the northern region here and Thailand.