

# MALAYSIA, THAILAND TO FORM TASK FORCES

**PM: 1 month set for report to chart next course of action to boost several sectors, including agriculture**

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**M**ALAYSIA and Thailand have agreed to set up task forces to boost several sectors, including agriculture and tourism, in the two countries.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said a month had been allocated for the submission of a report to chart the next course of action.

"I'm pleased with the pragmatic business-like decisions, which are rare in normal bilateral relations.

"The one month is for agriculture, tourism, and security, and of course trade and business, which would include the halal sector".

He said this in a joint press conference with Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin.

The two leaders were speaking after a four-eyed meeting during

Srettha's maiden official visit to the country since taking over in Bangkok on Sept 5.

Anwar said the two nations hoped to increase trade investments, complement each other and could benefit immensely from the experience of the neighbouring countries.

"Hopefully, in a month, we'll meet after the report is submitted to me and Prime Minister Srettha as we have a lot of multilateral meetings.

"I'm sure, based on his seriousness in developing relations in practical terms, we will then compare notes and execute effectively," he said.

Two of the multilateral meetings would be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, next week and in Japan in December, he added.

Meanwhile, Srettha said the security concerns at the Malaysian-Thai border was one of the issues discussed with Anwar.

"We agree to turn the minor war zone into a trade zone that would bring prosperity to the people in northern Malaysia and southern Thailand.

"We can benefit from good investment values and the number needs to be enhanced, with a target set in the near future."

Srettha said Thailand hoped to obtain Malaysia's halal certification in its effort to export such food products.

He said Thailand was a food-secure nation, with advanced agricultural technologies.

"Hence, we feel that we can increase productivity.

"Malaysia needs food and has the halal branding that could help Thailand to market the products globally."

Earlier, Srettha was granted an audience by Yang di-Pertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah at Istana Negara.

Bernama reported that the Thai leader, who arrived at 12.50pm, spent about 30 minutes meeting the king.

Also present were Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Mohamad Alamin, Home Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Amran Mohamed Zin and Malaysian ambassador to Thailand Datuk Jojie Samuel.

In 2022, Thailand was Malaysia's seventh largest trading partner globally and the third largest among the Asean member states, with total trade amounting to RM122.03 billion, an increase of 179 per cent compared with RM97.55 billion in 2021.

*Page one picture: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim welcoming his Thai counterpart, Srettha Thavisin, in Putrajaya yesterday.*