

LEADERS KEEN ON DEEPENING MALAYSIA-THAILAND TRADE TIES

Anwar and Thai counterpart propose holding Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation meeting soon

BANGKOK

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin agreed to deepen trade, investment and tourism cooperation when they met on the sidelines of the 78th United

Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on Thursday.

This marked Anwar's first official engagement with Srettha Thavisin since the Thai property developer became prime minister last month. The 30-minute meeting was attended by ministers from both sides.

"Besides discussing ways to strengthen bilateral ties, we also spoke on various issues, including borders, the peace process in southern Thailand and other regional issues of mutual interest," said Anwar.

Thai government spokesman Chai Watcharong said Thailand and Malaysia agreed that the next Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation meeting should be

held soon to promote economic cooperation between the nations.

He said Thailand proposed a meeting with the business sector to discuss ways to boost trade and investment.

"Prime Minister Srettha is optimistic about the future of relations between Thailand and Malaysia.

"He is committed to working closely with Malaysia to strengthen ties based on stability and mutual prosperity."

He said Srettha accepted Anwar's invitation to visit Malaysia.

Chai said the leaders pledged to work together to promote tourism between the countries.

"Malaysians topped the list of

international visitors to Thailand this year, with more than three million arrivals."

Chai said the leaders also pledged to cooperate on security issues along the Thailand and Malaysia borders, as well as peace process in southern Thailand.

He said Srettha welcomed Malaysia's role in facilitating peace talks in the southernmost provinces of Thailand.

Malaysia is a facilitator for the peace dialogue in ending the decades-old conflict in southern Thailand.

Former chief of defence force Tan Sri Zulkifli Zainal Abidin has been appointed as the new Malaysian chief facilitator effective Jan 1 this year. **Bernama**