



A vibrant greeting: Anwar (centre) and Dr Wan Azizah (right) arriving at the Soekarno-Hatta International Airport in conjunction with the 43rd Asean Summit 2023. - Bernama

PM: Ties with Indonesia can be expanded further

By RAHIMY RAHIM
rahimyr@thestar.com.my

JAKARTA: Relations between Malaysia and Indonesia can be further expanded in many areas, including trade, the economy, and empowering arts and culture, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said while Malaysia aims to boost the economy and bilateral ties during the 43rd Asean Summit, the promotion of arts and culture will not be left behind.

"Under the Madani concept, besides discussions of boosting diplomatic cooperation with Indonesian President Joko Widodo, I managed to take some time to meet with various people, including investors and entrepreneurs.

"I also got the chance to meet celebrities and influencers here and learn from their experiences.

"Our discussions involve bilateral ties as well as ways to empower arts and culture," he told reporters after attending the Santai Bersama Anwar programme last night.

At the event, Anwar met

Indonesian and Malaysian influencers and celebrities such as Nur Fazura, Mulan Jameelah, Kartika Putri and Melly Goeslow.

In a separate statement, the Prime Minister said Malaysia's participation in the summit would further strengthen the principle of Asean's centrality in the Indo-Pacific region and its commitment to inclusivity and openness in its relations with all its partners.

Anwar hoped the platform would foster unity, security and stability while addressing the challenges and diversity of evolving regional geopolitics.

"In addition to official programmes and events, I will also meet with friends in Indonesia through the 'Program Temu Anwar', which is being held outside of Malaysia for the first time.

"May everything proceed smoothly, God willing," the Prime

Minister added.

Earlier, Anwar attended a pre-council meeting ahead of the summit before starting the first in a series of programmes involving the Malaysian diaspora and Indonesians.

He arrived here at 3.28pm (local time) yesterday to lead the Malaysian delegation to the summit and related summits beginning today.

He was accompanied by his wife, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

The Prime Minister was welcomed by Indonesian Communications and Information Minister Budi Arie Setiadi.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir and Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz, who are part of the Malaysian delegation, were also present, along with Malaysia's ambassador to Indonesia, Datuk Syed Md Hasrin Tengku Hussin.

The summit, which runs until Thursday, is the second this year after the 42nd Asean Summit in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia.

This will be Anwar's first summit with the seven Asean dialogue partners - Australia, China, Japan, India, South Korea, the United States and Canada.

He is scheduled to hold 11 bilateral meetings during the summit, including with South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, United States vice-president Kamala Harris, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

Today, Anwar will participate in the summit's opening ceremony, proceed to the Asean-Indo Pacific Forum, and later meet with the Malaysian diaspora during the Temu Anwar event.

He will then partake in six summits tomorrow - the Asean-China, Asean-South Korea, Asean-Japan, Asean Plus Three, Asean-US and Asean-Canada meetings - during which the Asean-Canada Strategic Partnership will be launched.

Four summits will be held on Thursday - the Asean-India, Asean-East Asia, Asean-Australia and Asean-United Nations meetings.