

Malaysia to boost ties with Iran and Turkiye

PM and Erdogan also discussed ways to combat Islamophobia

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has pledged to deepen Malaysia's ties with Iran and Turkiye ahead of his United Nations debut as Prime Minister in New York.

Anwar met separately with Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan ahead of the 78th United Nations General Assembly session today, where he will deliver Malaysia's National Statement at the General Debate.

The Prime Minister also met with Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, where both of them discussed strengthening relations in various sectors.

Apart from the three, Anwar is also expected to meet Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al Sudani.

Anwar is also scheduled to meet with US business leaders

after addressing the UN.

In a Facebook post, Anwar expressed Malaysia's desire to enhance cooperation with Iran in the fields of economy, education, food security, science and technology.

Malaysia will conduct a Joint Commission Meeting and a Joint Economic Commission between the two countries to refine the potential scope of cooperation.

"Hopefully, the relations between Malaysia and Iran will continue to be strengthened for mutual benefit," he said.

Anwar is currently in New York to attend the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

In the earlier meeting, Anwar and Erdogan discussed strategies to combat Islamophobia and the possibility of Malaysia buying arms from Turkiye.

"We discussed (the issue) of extreme prejudice against Islam



Meeting of minds: Anwar and Raisi during a bilateral meeting ahead of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. - Bernama

in the West and other countries.

"In my meeting with President Erdogan, we agreed to enhance efforts on cooperation and strategies to resolve such issues," Anwar told reporters, Bernama reported.

"A series of conferences were organised prior to this, and they will continue (to be held). Further discussions on efforts against Islamophobia will continue to be pursued during Erdogan's visit to Malaysia in December."

Both leaders issued a joint statement titled "Increasing Hatred, Intolerance, Discrimination and Acts of Violence Against Muslims and Their Sanctities".

In the statement, Anwar and Erdogan voiced their concerns about growing Islamophobia and the burning of the Quran in several European countries while urging the UN and other govern-

ments to enhance efforts towards religious tolerance.

During his meeting, Anwar said Malaysia had expressed its interest in purchasing military equipment from Turkiye.

"We could be looking at drones and helicopters, according to Turkiye's area of specialisation. However, I will leave it to the Armed Forces to decide on what is best," he said.

Anwar was accompanied by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir; Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz; and Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa.

Anwar was also scheduled to participate in a roundtable discussion with Fortune 500 companies at the Harvard Club of New York City later yesterday.

The event was organised by the

Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry and the Malaysian Investment Development Authority.

Anwar is then expected to speak at the Invest Malaysia New York event organised by Bursa Malaysia.

He will hold meetings with entrepreneurs and potential new investors from the United States at these two high-profile events.

For the first half of the year, Malaysia attracted a total of RM132.6bil worth of approved investments in the services, manufacturing and primary sectors, involving 2,651 projects that are expected to create 51,853 jobs in the country.

Anwar will also attend a discussion session with members of the Council on Foreign Relations, an independent non-partisan think tank that focuses on international relations and foreign policy.