



Anwar and his wife Datuk Seri Wan Azizah Wan Ismail on stage with Indonesia President Joko Widodo and First Lady Iriana upon their arrival for the Asean Summit in Jakarta yesterday. -AFPPIC

Asean solidarity

JAKARTA: Asean must guard against divisive actions from major powers and uphold the group's position to protect all that has been achieved from being undermined by their unbridled rivalry, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said yesterday.

Speaking at the 43rd Asean Summit Plenary Session, he said the group, with its diversity being its strength, must enhance its institutional capacities, streamline mechanisms and ensure timely implementation of its decisions.

"Asean has a unique opportunity through its platforms to bring together competing parties to remind them of the need to prioritise dialogue and cooperation, to promote healthy competition and to ensure what they bring into their relations with Asean would help maintain peace, stability and prosperity in this region," he said.

Anwar pointed out that those outside the region have recognised Asean as one of the

> Bloc has platforms to urge competing parties to prioritise dialogue, cooperation: PM

most successful regional organisations, particularly with its ability to maintain a region that is peaceful, stable, secure and prosperous, Bernama reported.

"This has attracted many to establish relations with Asean, including major powers whose rivalries are being played out right at the centre of and adjacent to our region," he said.

On the "2023 edition of the standard map of China" Anwar said Malaysia has issued its statement clearly, stating its position.

"Issues on the South China Sea must be managed peacefully and rationally through dialogue and consultation by the universally recognised principle of international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the

Seas 1982," he said.

On the Asean community post-2025 vision, Anwar said Asean Community Vision 2045 outlines a clear, long-term strategic direction for the group to achieve its goal of an Asean community that can effectively respond to current and future challenges and opportunities.

He expressed hope that all leaders could agree to allow for some flexibility for necessary adjustments to be made to the vision in light of relevant developments between now and its final adoption in 2025.

"Malaysia thanks Indonesia for co-chairing the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) with Malaysia in 2023 as well as its excellent support

and cooperation in carrying forward the HLTF's work. We look forward to working with Laos next year."

As the coordinator of the Asean-Gulf Cooperation Summit, he highlighted that Asean and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have agreed to hold the summit in Saudi Arabia on Oct 20, adding that two outcome documents have been proposed, which are a joint statement on the Asean-GCC Summit and Asean-GCC Framework of Cooperation (2024-2028).

"They are currently being negotiated by our officials. There is a proposal for an Asean-GCC Ministerial Meeting on Oct 19 to finalise preparations for the summit," he said.

On the Asean chairmanship rotation, Anwar conveyed Malaysia's appreciation to the Philippines for its readiness to assume the position in 2026 and join a consensus for other member countries to continue the rotation based on alphabetical order, unless otherwise decided by the leaders.