

3RD TRIP TO NATION AS PM

ANWAR ON 2-DAY VISIT TO BRUNEI

Event marks 40th anniversary of bilateral ties

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's two-day working visit to Brunei is set to strengthen the bond shared by the nations, which includes the institution of Malay rulers and other common features, such as culture, language and heritage. Anwar's visit to Brunei is also significant as it marks the 40th year of diplomatic relations between the two neighbours. This is his third visit as prime

minister to the capital here, with the first in January last year.

That time, Anwar attended the royal wedding of Prince Abdul Mateen Bolkiah and Dayang Anisha Rosnah at the invitation of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah and Queen Consort Pengiran Anak Saleha, underscoring the close ties shared by the countries.

Anwar, who left last night, will attend the 25th Malaysia-Brunei Darussalam Annual Leaders' Consultation (ALC) here.

He will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor, International Trade and Industry Minister Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir, and Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek.



People walking next to food stalls near Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque in Brunei in January. AFP PIC

Others accompanying him are Sarawak Deputy Premier Datuk Seri Awang Tengah Ali Hasan, Deputy Transport Minister Datuk Hasbi Habibollah, Deputy Youth and Sports Minister Adam Adli Abd Halim, Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Dr Zulkifli Hasan and senior government officials.

He was welcomed by Malaysian high commissioner to Brunei, Nur Ezira Mahadi, as well as Brunei's Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II Dato Seri Setia Dr Awang Haji Mohd

Amin Liew Abdullah and Foreign Affairs Minister II Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Erywan Pehin Dato Pekerma Jaya Haji Mohd Yusof.

Nur Ezira described the ALC as the highest bilateral mechanism between Malaysia and Brunei.

She said Anwar and the Malaysian delegation are scheduled to proceed to Istana Nurul Iman, where the prime minister will have a private audience with Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah.

"They will review the progress of bilateral cooperation as well as discuss outstanding issues.

"As close neighbours and partners in Asean, the two leaders

will also exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest," she said.

Anwar and Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah will witness the signing of bilateral instruments.

Finally, Anwar will attend a dinner hosted by the sultan before departing for Kuala Lumpur.

Last year, Brunei was Malaysia's 30th largest trading partner and the sixth largest among Asean member states, with total trade of RM9.31 billion.

Total exports to Brunei last year was at RM6.40 billion, while total imports from Brunei was at RM2.91 billion.