

MEETING IN BRUNEI SUCCESSFUL SAYS PM

Our approach has shifted to direct engagement in various areas, says Anwar

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim acknowledged that he is utilising valuable personal connections to bolster diplomatic relations with Brunei.

"For instance, shortly after I took office as prime minister, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei visited Malaysia unannounced as a gesture of goodwill and support.

"This development is personally significant for me and reflects Brunei's readiness to embark on a new chapter in our bilateral relationship," he said at a press conference held at Brunei International Airport following the 25th Malaysia-Brunei Annual Leaders' Consultation event at the Nurul Iman Palace.

He said that during a private meeting and luncheon with Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, they discussed mutual support to enhance bilateral ties.

He added that while there had been minor issues in the past, the relationship remained strong thanks to the efforts of previous leaderships.

"There are two key differences now: First, our commitment to advancing every possible field, and second, our approach has shifted to direct engagement in various areas, with final decisions resting with the federal government."

Anwar said cooperation between Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei was being prioritised, especially in tourism and agriculture.

Both leaders also endorsed the collaboration between the Brunei Petroleum Authority and Petrolia Nasional Bhd (Petronas) under the commercial arrangement area.

An ad-hoc committee has been established to address and finalise maritime issues, including the Terms Of Reference, demonstrating a collaborative effort to



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim (left) and Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei reciting prayers before a meal at the Nurul Iman Palace in Bandar Seri Begawan, yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

resolve maritime concerns between the two nations.

Economic cooperation is intensifying, with potential collaborations in energy, tourism, agriculture and air connectivity.

Malaysia's Higher Education Leadership Academy will support Brunei with leadership training for higher education, while Institut Kemahiran Tinggi Belia Negara will provide training in electric vehicle technology.

Anwar described the meeting with the Brunei government as successful.

"The discussions were in-depth, covering various fields. Both the government and His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam aim to elevate our cooperation and friendship to the highest level," he said.

This two-day visit to Brunei, marking the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries, is Anwar's third visit there as prime minister, following visits in January last year and earlier this year.

His attendance at the royal wedding of Brunei's Prince Abdul Mateen Bolkiah and Dayang Anisha Rosnah further highlighted the close ties between the nations.

Earlier, Anwar met with the king at Nurul Iman Istana.

Also present at the meeting were Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor, Deputy Sarawak Premier Datuk Seri Laila Jasa Awang Tengah Ali Hasan, For-

eign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, 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.

He expressed gratitude to both the federal government and the Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Openg, as well as Deputy Premier Douglas Uggah Embas, for their attention to resolving several complex issues.

He added that Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah's commitment to resolving stalled border issues was a significant step forward for both Brunei and Malaysia.

The leaders also witnessed the signing of several bilateral agreements, including the First Phase of Land Border Demarcation, and Exchange of Notes outlining commitments to marking and measurement in priority areas.

Also signed was a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the Field of Transportation focusing on flights between Brunei and Sarawak, as well as Brunei and Sabah — and maritime access.

Mohamad said Malaysia and Brunei aimed to complete the demarcation of the remaining 70 per cent of their land border by 2034.

"We agreed on 33 per cent of the boundary demarcation. About 70 per cent remains to be finalised by 2034."