

Anwar, Timor-Leste PM to discuss bilateral ties, regional issues

KUALA LUMPUR

THE prime minister of Timor-Leste, Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, is on a three-day official visit to Malaysia starting yesterday, his first since assuming office on July 1, 2023.

The Foreign Ministry said Xanana Gusmao would be accorded an official welcome at the Perdana Putra Complex in Putrajaya, to be followed by a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"The two leaders are expected to take stock of the state of bilateral relations, as well as discuss potential collaborations between the countries."

It said trade and investment, the halal industry, education, capacity building and connectivity were the main topics of discussion between the leaders.

Wisma Putra said both prime ministers would also exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual concern.

It said both leaders would witness the signing of the Land Concession Agreement pertaining to the gift of a parcel of land by the government of Timor-Leste for the development of the Malaysian embassy's Chancery Complex in Dili.

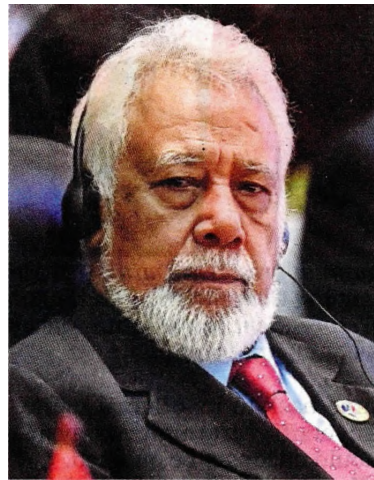
Wisma Putra said Timor-Leste had decided to transfer the land outright to Malaysia as a sign of gratitude for its continued assistance and contributions since the early days of Timor-Leste's independence.

Additionally, it said, both leaders would witness the exchange of notes on a visa exemption arrangement, which will grant reciprocal visa exemptions to the citizens of both countries.

Anwar will host an official luncheon in honour of Xanana Gusmao and his delegation at Seri Perdana in Putrajaya.

Xanana Gusmao is also scheduled to have an audience with His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim, King of Malaysia.

He is scheduled to deliver a



Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao

public lecture titled "International Diplomacy in an Increasingly Fragmented and Fragile World" at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations.

"This official visit will further strengthen the relations enjoyed by both countries and demonstrate Malaysia's continued support for Timor-Leste's aspiration

of becoming a full member of Asean," said Wisma Putra.

Last year, the total bilateral trade between Malaysia and Timor-Leste was US\$43.7 million.

Total exports from Malaysia to Timor-Leste last year were recorded at US\$43.3 million, and total imports of products from Timor-Leste amounted to US\$400,000.

In Jakarta, it was reported that Asean secretary-general Dr Kao Kim Hourn will embark on a three-day working visit to Malaysia, starting today, where he will meet with Anwar to discuss preparations for Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean in 2025.

The visit, which, comes at the invitation of Wisma Putra, was confirmed by the Asean Secretariat.

According to the secretariat, Kao's meetings with Anwar will focus on Malaysia's key priorities and deliverables as it takes on the Asean chairmanship under the theme, "Inclusivity and Sustainability".

He will also engage with top Malaysian officials, including Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz, Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing and Auditor General Datuk Seri Wan Suraya Wan Mohd Radzi.

The discussions aim to ensure Malaysia's comprehensive preparations for its leadership role and to provide full support, the secretariat added.

The visit follows the Oct 11 handover of the Asean chairmanship from Laos to Malaysia at the closing of the 44th and 45th Asean Summits in Vientiane.

Anwar had received the Asean chairmanship gavel from Lao Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone, officially marking Malaysia's return to the role, set to begin on Jan 1, 2025.

Malaysia previously held the Asean chairmanship in 1977, 1997, 2005 and 2015. **Bernama**