

M'sia applies to join BRICS, boost ties with Russia

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim says Malaysia submitted an application to Russia to join the BRICS intergovernmental organisation.

In a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office, Anwar said Malaysia's desire to join the BRICS organisation was the main topic of his discussion with visiting Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov who called on the Prime Minister at the Seri Perdana Complex here yesterday.

"Malaysia has sent a letter of application to join the (BRICS) organisation to Russia as the BRICS chairman, besides expressing openness to participate as a member country or strategic partner," he said.

On June 18, Anwar confirmed Malaysia's intention to join BRICS to Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

BRICS, which initially included Brazil, Russia, India and China, was established in 2009 as a cooperation platform for emerging economies, with South Africa joining the bloc in 2010.

The bloc now has been expanded to include Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates.

BRICS now contributes to a quarter of the global economy, accounts for one-fifth of global trade and represents about 40% of the world's population.

Earlier, Lavrov and his delega-



Forging new relations: Anwar speaking to Lavrov (right) at Kompleks Seri Perdana in Putrajaya. - Photo courtesy of AFIQ HAMBALI/PMO

tion, who arrived at the Seri Perdana Complex at 10am, were welcomed by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Bernama reported.

Also present were Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin and Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir.

During the nearly hour-long meeting, Anwar and Lavrov also discussed boosting Malaysia-Russia ties and cooperation in various sectors, including trade, investment, security, defence, higher education, science and technology, tourism and culture.

The current situation in Palestine was also discussed, with

Malaysia emphasising the urgent need for a permanent ceasefire and rapid humanitarian aid to Gaza, as well as Palestine's acceptance as a full member of the United Nations.

Regarding Ukraine, Anwar also called for dialogue and discussion as the means to resolve the conflict.