

# PM EYES RESOLUTION BY YEAR END

Anwar wants issues like water sale, flight information region and sea demarcation settled before retreat

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**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim hopes outstanding issues between Malaysia and Singapore will be resolved before the annual Singapore-Malaysia leaders retreat at the end of this year.

At a joint press conference yesterday with his Singapore counterpart, Lawrence Wong, Anwar said this included the issues surrounding the sale of water, flight information region (FIR) and maritime demarcation.

"If you ask for a timeline, it should have been resolved yesterday. But we understand the complexities and we appreciate the need to resolve this amicably.

"Notwithstanding some minor differences, it shouldn't deter us from exploring new avenues and working together."

He said the issue now was to ensure that all the details and the "nitty-gritty" were resolved.

He said the faster the issues were resolved, the better it would be for the two countries.

"There is no question that (with) water, it is quite established that we need to sell water to Singapore.

"Similarly for FIR, it is no ques-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim looking on as Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong signs a guestbook in Putrajaya yesterday. With them are Anwar's wife, Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail (left), and Wong's wife, Loo Tze Zui. BERNAMA PIC

tion that it is being required by Changi (International Airport), and it is the same with maritime boundaries and economic and financial zone processes."

Anwar gave his assurance that he would ensure the government worked faster to resolve outstanding issues as best as they can.

"It would be wonderful and marvelous if we can resolve it before the bilateral meeting end of this year.

"We need to resolve it. There's

no way we can get out of it. It is something that we as good neighbours have to get done.

"I need to showcase to the region and the world how good neighbours should behave and interact, so I look forward to that final amicable resolution."

Anwar had a four-eyed meeting with Wong that lasted over an hour at Seri Perdana.

Wong said his meeting with Anwar was a good opportunity to touch base and take stock of out-

standing issues.

He said differences on issues should not affect the relationship between the countries and must not detract from the pursue of new areas of cooperation.

"So that is the spirit we have in thinking and addressing these issues. And if we cannot resolve it completely, we look forward to at least see very good progress by the time we meet at the upcoming leaders' retreat."

He said Singapore fully sup-

ported Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean next year and expressed hope that the regional bloc would further flourish.

He said he was confident that under Malaysia and Anwar's leadership, Asean would develop as a stronger and more integrated community, with deeper relations with external dialogue partners.

"Singapore will fully support Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean and we hope to be able to work together to set an ambitious and forward looking agenda for Asean for the next 10 to 20 years."

Anwar said he and Wong had touched on the need to work together in the Asean framework.

He said Malaysia and Singapore felt that Asean was extremely important and strategic and expressed their joint commitment to ensure that the bloc could function more effectively.

Wong said Singapore deeply valued the strong bilateral relations and said the country would continue to pursue a win-win cooperation with Malaysia.

"Our two countries already cooperate substantively across almost every sector, including health, education, trade, culture, investments, connectivity and also in emerging areas like digital economy, renewable energy."

He said he looked forward to the Johor-Singapore economic zone and the Rapid Transit System link.

"Both will increase the cross-border flow of people, goods, investments, bring two countries closer together and ultimately, benefit both Malaysians and Singaporeans."