

# PM: TIES WITH CHINA GROUNDED ON RESPECT

Anwar eases doubts among foreign observers and Malaysians on closer relationship with China

KUALA LUMPUR

**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the deepening of ties between Malaysia and China is grounded on mutual respect.

He said the ties between the two countries were echoes of historical precedents dating back to the emperors of China and the sultans of Melaka.

In a post on Facebook, Anwar sought to assuage doubts among Malaysians and international observers about the implications of a closer cooperation with China, particularly given Malaysia's small size.

"Many of my overseas friends asked whether our enhanced bilateral relationship with China could disadvantage Malaysia, especially as we are a smaller nation.

"I assured them that our relationship is rooted in mutual respect."

Highlighting discussions with Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Anwar said it reaffirmed his belief in the friendly, courteous and respectful nature of the Chinese leadership.

"Despite the barrage of questions and narratives, especially from the West, I have witnessed a profound understanding and appreciation of cultural differences from our Chinese counterparts.

"Throughout our discussions, there was no hint of arrogance or condescension. We tackled contentious issues as equal partners and trusted friends."

He took the opportunity to reassure Malaysians and the international community that the country's relationship with China was built on genuine respect and friendship.

"Our relationship with China reflects genuine respect and friendship.

"We remain committed to nur-



Chinese and Malaysian companies inked 14 memoranda of understanding during Premier Li Qiang's (left) visit to Malaysia. BERNAMA PIC

turing and strengthening the bonds between Malaysia and China," Anwar said.

Malaysian-Chinese relations were strengthened during Li's three-day visit to Malaysia, which ended on Thursday.

Malaysia and China inked 14 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) in various areas, including digital economy, green development and tourism.

Anwar and Li also boosted ties with further visa exemptions, the exchange of skills and technology, and a commitment to maintain regional security.

Li had expressed his willingness to share China's experience in poverty reduction and rural revitalisation with Malaysia, as well as provide aid to improve the wellbeing of Malaysians.

Anwar and Li also agreed to strengthen cooperation in trade, investment, infrastructure connectivity, including rail transportation, infrastructure cooperation and to contribute and support the vision of a Pan-Asian Railway, and to continue promoting key projects, including Malaysia's East Coast Rail Link and the "Two Countries, Twin Parks" between China and Malaysia.

Anwar said China shared Malaysia's stance on issues on the world stage.

He both countries would continue to urge the United Nations Security Council to reconsider Palestine's application for full membership, in line with the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on May 10.

In a separate development, Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Chang Lih Kang said Malaysia's plan to join BRICS

(Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) would not adversely impact its electrical and electronics (E&E) sector.

Chang told Bernama that Malaysia was prepared to join the grouping as it offered numerous benefits to the country, including in terms of research and development in the E&E sector.

"We continue to maintain our neutrality (amid United States-China tensions).

"The bid to join BRICS is for mutual benefit as BRICS encompasses nine countries that account for 45 per cent of the global population.

"This is a very large market and we hope to gain access to the market.

"I do not see the entry into BRICS as changing our neutral stance. We remain neutral but are joining BRICS for economic benefits," he said.

Earlier yesterday, Chang attended the pre-launch of the Industrial Technology Innovation Centre (ITIC) and official opening of the Semiconductor Research Consortium and Mimos Academy at the Kulim Hi-tech Park in Kedah.

He said the country's participation in BRICS would be a participation in a multilateral platform in addition to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and similar platforms.

"BRICS is just one of the multilateral platforms that we are joining.

"Many other countries, besides Malaysia, are also interested in joining BRICS, including the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia," he added.