

PM IN GERMANY TO WOO FIRMS, BOOST OLD TIES

Anwar will call on German leaders, meet business chiefs and address SME conference



**NAJMUDDIN
NAJIB**

BERLIN

AN enduring friendship built on strong economic ties and mutual respect, with a keen eye on the future, will set the tone for Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's first official visit to Germany as prime minister today.

After a successful tour of Melbourne and Canberra, where Australian companies expressed interest in investing RM24.5 billion in Malaysia, the prime minister now trains his sights on German investors, both new as well as those with a presence in Malaysia, as part of his visit to Berlin and Hamburg.

Malaysian ambassador to Germany Datin Paduka Dr Adina Kamarudin said Anwar's six-day itinerary will see him meet senior German leaders, captains of industry, academics and policy-makers as well as the Malaysian diaspora.

He is scheduled to arrive in Berlin Brandenburg Airport at 10pm on March 10 (5am today Malaysian time), where he will be welcomed by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Adina as well as German officials.

Apart from Mohamad, also accompanying Anwar are Investment, Trade and Industry Min-

ister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz and Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives Minister Datuk Ewon Benedick.

Adina said Anwar would visit to the Siemens Energy plant here today. Siemens, she said, had invested heavily in Malaysia and was focusing on renewable energy.

This will be followed by a courtesy call on President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at Bellevue Palace.

Steinmeier visited Malaysia in February last year, when he stated that Malaysia was set to become a key destination for German companies to diversify their businesses and investments, with more than 700 German companies in Malaysia creating 65,000 jobs.

Adina said: "This can, in a way, be viewed as a furtherance of the discussion that they previously had.

"President Steinmeier has a deep interest in Malaysia and enjoys a keen friendship with the prime minister."

Later in the evening, Anwar will be accorded an official welcome with full military honours by Chancellor Olaf Scholz at the Federal Chancellery, followed by a private meeting.

The two leaders will hold a joint press conference with Malaysian and German media before attending a dinner hosted by Scholz.

The following day, Anwar will attend a roundtable with around 30 captains of industry, followed by a business meeting with selected companies.

These captains of industry, Adina said, comprised significant players in the German economy and key investors to Malaysia.

She said the business meeting included major names, such as Infineon, Schott AG, Melexis and Airbus, and could lead to big investments.

In the evening, Anwar will hold a session with the Malaysian diaspora in Germany, including students, professionals and those who have settled down in the country.

After the breaking of fast and Maghrib prayers, he will then join the congregation at the Sehittlik Mosque in Berlin for Isyak and Tarawih prayers.

Anwar will then engage with German Muslims for an exchange of views.

The following day, he will have an interactive session at the Korber Foundation in Berlin, an independent, non-profit think tank that focuses on international relations, including issues pertaining to the Middle East.

He will then meet German Vice-Chancellor Robert Habeck before attending Mittelstand Future Day, an annual conference of German small- and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs), where he will also deliver a keynote address.