

Anwar: Opportunities aplenty for Gulf-Asean trade

RIYADH: The Asean-Gulf Cooperation Council (Asean-GCC) should find mechanisms to advance trade, investments, collaboration and research, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In his opening remarks at the Joint Regional Strategy Dialogue on Asean-GCC on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum's special meeting here, Anwar said collaboration between both sides is mutually beneficial.

"Not only do we (Asean) welcome GCC participation in terms of investments and collaboration, but we also want more Asean companies to be active here in the Kingdom (Saudi Arabia), in the UAE (United Arab Emirates), Qatar, and neighbouring countries," he said.

As South-East Asia is one of the fastest growing regions, Anwar said Asean member states have taken a more pragmatic approach to discussing both bilateral and multilateral relations among their neighbours, Bernama reported.

"We have been excellent part-



Cementing ties: Anwar (middle) with Turkiye Foreign Affairs Minister Hakan (left) during a discussion on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) Special Meeting in Riyadh. With them is Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan (right). — Bernama

ners, we work together, we discuss frankly, and we do set our priorities right and we take into consideration some of the new emerging issues, which are also a challenge to us, like energy transi-

tion, digital transformation and food security," he added.

Anwar said South-East Asia is fortunate to be one of the most peaceful regions, adding that the Myanmar crisis is the only prob-

lem yet to be resolved.

However, he said Asean has a clear position on the crisis, emphasising the Five-Point Consensus as the basis for dealing with it

"And we give this latitude for neighbouring countries ... to Thailand, Laos, to engage quietly with Myanmar to find an amicable resolution," he added.

Anwar also highlighted the level of cohesiveness Asean has, adding that he would continue to aggressively promote Asean as Malaysia assumes the chairmanship next year.

"Of course, the members are independent countries but when we speak, we speak on behalf of all of us. I just assume everybody will agree and of course, because of the extensive discussion on the number of issues and collaborations, that makes us quite comfortable," he said.

The inaugural Asean-GCC Summit held in Riyadh last year agreed to hold the summit every two years with the next set to take place in Malaysia in 2025.