

Great potential for M'sia-Uzbekistan cooperation: PM

SAMARKAND: There is huge potential for cooperation between Malaysia and Uzbekistan, which can transform and modernise both countries' economic development and attract investments, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said for the last one and a half years, Malaysia has been seen as a

hub for microchip semiconductors in the region through many investments by major foreign companies.

"Our future capabilities, our ability to build on our own strengths among emerging economies, that's Uzbekistan and Malaysia," he said at the high-level

Uzbekistan-Malaysia Business Forum at the Silk Road Samarkand Complex here on Saturday.

Uzbekistan Deputy Prime Minister Jamshid Khodjaev was present at the business forum which was attended by about 200 companies from both countries.

Anwar said Malaysia and

Uzbekistan should focus on working together in areas such as digital transformation, energy transition and *halal* development.

He said trade and investment between the two countries have increased yearly.

In 2023, total trade between Malaysia and Uzbekistan was RM451.1 million, with exports to Uzbekistan amounting to RM449 million and imports amounting to RM1.99 million.

Anwar said the two Muslim-majority countries could also form special strategic partnerships in new areas, including those related to Muslim interests.

"Not only cooperation and hospitality on *halal* development, *halal* certification and *halal* industry, but we can also cooperate in culture and art to a level coordinated by senior ministers (from both countries)."

He added that they could also focus on education and the new field of digital technology, especially artificial intelligence.

"Our future capabilities depend on how we build our strengths (together). We should always think we can complement each other."

Anwar is currently in Uzbekistan for a three-day official visit that began with his arrival in Tashkent on Friday.



Anwar and the Malaysian delegation visiting the tomb of famous *hadith* expert Imam Bukhari in Uzbekistan. - BERNAMAPIC