



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim meeting Chinese Premier Li Qiang at the Grand Halls in Shanghai, China, yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

'GREAT FRIENDS'

'MALAYSIA, CHINA TIES A BOON FOR REGION'

Both committed to beefing up links and advancing region's prosperity, says PM in bilateral meeting

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Malaysia and China are great friends committed to strengthening their partnership and advancing the region's economic prosperity, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

During a bilateral meeting with Chinese Premier Li Qiang yesterday, Anwar expressed Malaysia's deep appreciation for China's support in various areas, including Malaysia's participation in BRICS.

"I think things are going exceptionally well. We have expanded into all areas, including cooperation in the economy, education, technical and vocational education and training, military understanding and cooperation in protecting our borders.

"We are now two great friends. I look forward to when I assume the chairmanship of Asean. I hope we can work together to strengthen

Asean-China relations and help grow the Asean economy."

Anwar thanked Li for visiting Malaysia in June to commemorate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

He said since the visit, discussions on several issues and major investments had progressed at an accelerated pace.

"You spent so much time exchanging ideas with the Malaysian business community, the public and academics.

"For weeks, the media will be covering that you can become a threat to the Malaysian prime minister," Anwar said in jest.

The bilateral meeting was held on the second day of Anwar's working trip to China. During the 30-minute meeting, the leaders exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual concern and interest.

Present at the meeting were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan and Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz.

During the meeting, several memoranda of understanding were exchanged, including one on cooperation between the Malaysian National News Agency and the China Media Group.

Li's June visit to Malaysia marked a significant step forward

in bilateral relations. It was his first visit to Malaysia since taking office in March last year.

Analysts said the visit would elevate the comprehensive strategic relationship between the two nations to new heights.

Earlier in his keynote address at the opening of the 7th China International Import Expo, Anwar said as the world's fifth largest economy, Asean had the potential to be the driving force behind inclusive socio-economic growth that leads the way to an unprecedented era of sustainable and shared prosperity.

"As you have seen here in China, where it promotes good governance and combating and rooting out corruption, as well as implementing socio-economic and industrial reform agendas, we are also leaving no stone unturned.

"We continue to be inspired by Premier Li Qiang's extraordinary success in battling poverty, which clearly signifies a major achievement in social re-engineering."

Anwar said Malaysia aims to enhance regional cooperation and promote an inclusive role based on the regional framework as it assumes the Asean chairmanship next year.

He said Malaysia would embrace the forward-looking and shared future principles that China championed to organise the Asean Summit.