

KL, HANOI COMMITTED TO BETTER TIES

Relations upgraded to comprehensive strategic partnership

IYLIA MARSYA ISKANDAR
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

MALAYSIA and Vietnam are committed to strengthening ties through a comprehensive strategic partnership, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Speaking at a joint press conference with Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee general secretary To Lam at Kompleks Seri Perdana here yesterday, Anwar described the former's visit as "very meaningful".

"This visit enables our countries to enhance relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership.

"The general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam has been very forthcoming and supportive, and so are the leaders in Vietnam," he said.

"We will make sure that we will facilitate the collaboration in all fields, as you see in the memorandum of understanding they signed with the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Petrolia Nasional Bhd and the Asean Energy Grid."

He said Vietnam's consistent support for Malaysian businesses, which had invested more than US\$13 billion across 700 projects in the country, demonstrated its



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim shaking hands with Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee general secretary To Lam in Putrajaya yesterday. NSTP PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH

positive and proactive stance.

This, he said, included support for Malaysia's term as Asean chair.

Anwar said the next joint commission meeting between the two nations was expected early next year here, subject to agreement by the foreign ministers.

He said there were also plans to explore collaboration in the fishing industry.

"Since we have been successful in terms of joint development authorities between two countries, we have agreed to explore joint efforts in the fishing industry so that we can work on the business of trust and friendship."

Anwar praised Vietnam's resilience in maintaining independence and expressed anticipation for a visit to Dien Bien Phu, a historic battlefield.

To Lam said both countries will continue to work closely to expand and deepen friendship and political trust on the basis of re-

spect for international law, political systems, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, in line with the laws and regulations of both countries on the basis of non-interference.

He said both countries will also promote economic connectivity and strive to raise bilateral trade turnover to US\$18 billion or more.

"We'll expand cooperation in the halal industry. We'll encourage our business to expand investments in each other's country and we are committed to protect the legitimate interest in oil and gas corporations in maritime economy and renewable energy

"We also pledge to strengthen cooperation in other areas, including in the green economy, innovations, science and technology, digital transformation, green energy and other areas."

This is To Lam's inaugural visit to Malaysia since being elected as head of the Communist Party of Vietnam in August.