

PM: Speed up FA-50M deal

Malaysia requests S. Korea deliver fighter jets earlier

SEOUL: Malaysia has requested that the acquisition of South Korean-made FA-50M fighter jets, previously scheduled for completion in 2026, be expedited, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"We are requesting that the (process) of the acquisition that was made a few years ago, (namely) 18 units of FA-50M aircraft, which should arrive (in 2026), be expedited.

"If possible, expedite it," the Prime Minister told Malaysian journalists at the end of his official visit to South Korea yesterday.

He, however, did not give

details on the negotiation to expedite the acquisition process.

In September, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin said fighter jet manufacturer Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) and Hanwha Aerospace had reached 38% of the aircraft's construction.

The jets would cost RM4bil.

On his visit to South Korea, the Prime Minister said it has generated potential investments worth RM32.8bil for Malaysia.

He said the visit not only strengthened bilateral ties between the two countries but also created opportunities to

attract high-impact investments to Malaysia.

In addition to his bilateral meeting with President Yoon Suk-yeol, Anwar held closed-door meetings with several South Korean conglomerates, including chaebols (family-owned conglomerates) that traditionally enjoy close ties with the South Korean government.

The companies that the Prime Minister had met included Hyundai Motor, Lotte, OCI Holdings, Samsung, SK Nexilis and Posco.

"As of now, potential investments amount to RM32.8bil while

Malaysia's potential exports (to South Korea) stand at RM1.3bil," he said.

Earlier, Hyundai Motor announced new investments amounting to US\$479mil (RM2.14bil) in Malaysia over a six-year period starting next year through a strategic partnership with Inokom for the automotive assembly of several new models.

South Korea is Malaysia's seventh largest trading partner while Malaysia is South Korea's 11th largest trading partner.

For the first 10 months of this year, bilateral trade reached US\$19.8bil (RM91.1bil).