

CONSENSUS GOAL FOR MALAYSIA

As Asean chair in 2025, Malaysia will champion inclusivity and sustainability, says Anwar

KUALA LUMPUR

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Malaysia's decisions as Asean chair next year will be based on consensus.

In a Facebook post on Friday, he said Malaysia had chosen the theme "Inclusivity and Sustainability" for its chairmanship, reflecting the aspiration for shared progress without leaving anyone behind.

"The year 2025 marks a significant milestone for Asean as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Asean Community and introduce the Asean Community Vision 2045.

"InsyaAllah, Malaysia will lead Asean into the future with confidence, strengthening and expanding regional economic cooperation, including by hosting the Asean-GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) + China Summit in 2025."

He represented Malaysia in receiving the chairmanship at the closing ceremony of the 44th and 45th Asean Summits and Related Summits in Vientiane, Laos.

He congratulated Laos for its

leadership during its chairmanship this year.

"Malaysia looks forward to collaboration and support from Laos and other Asean partners during our chairmanship next year."

He said Asean would ensure Southeast Asia remained a peaceful and prosperous region.

"On behalf of the government and the people of Malaysia, I warmly welcome all our partners."

On Friday, he held a bilateral meeting with Laotian Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone on the sidelines of the summits.

He said Malaysia was committed to exploring business opportunities in Laos and was looking forward to boosting cooperation.

Malaysia Business Chamber Laos president Tee Chee Seng urged Malaysian investors to seize investment opportunities in Laos as the Land of a Million Elephants held great potential in hydropower, semiconductor, transport, electronics, logistics and the halal market.

He said Malaysian companies could explore the potential in the landlocked country.

"They can venture into many investment sectors, especially in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone along the Mekong River," he said, noting that Malaysia was Laos' fourth largest trading partner.

Tee said in his 16 years in Laos, the country had made significant changes, especially in infrastructure, and now had a stronger land

and air transport network.

"There is a direct flight from Kuala Lumpur to Vientiane.

"The railway network from Malaysia opens up import and export opportunities to China and Europe."

He said the newly launched cargo rail service connecting Malaysia, Thailand, Laos and China would open new and low-cost markets in the region.

He said the first Asean Express departed Kelana Jaya's inland depot in Selangor on June 27.

"We are proud to have a Malaysian-owned train in Laos, an effort by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim during his 2023 visit to Laos.

"During that visit, a memorandum of understanding was signed between KTMB and Laos Railway.

"So, there are opportunities for Malaysians and the Lao people to do business because we have solved the logistic problem."

On the halal sector, Tee said the chamber was collaborating with the Malaysian embassy in Vientiane to secure halal certification from the Islamic Development Department for Lao agricultural products to enter Malaysia and China.

He said he hoped the summits would help the chamber attract more investors to Laos.

"Through Laos, we can penetrate a vast market, as far as China and Europe, so it is a good opportunity for Malaysian investors to come and do business here."

Bernama