

PM hails fruitful bilateral meeting

Malaysia hopes to tap Pakistan for skilled labour in tech expansion

ISLAMABAD: Malaysia is looking to Pakistan as a source of skilled labour as it expands its use of artificial intelligence and information technology, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister is also hopeful that Pakistan will assist in providing skilled labour in the semiconductor sector.

Describing the meeting with his Pakistani counterpart Shehbaz Sharif as fruitful, Anwar said Malaysia had agreed in principle, to import 100,000 metric tonnes of halal meat as well as Basmati rice from the country.

He expressed confidence that Pakistan's halal meat exporters would have no problem adhering to Malaysia's stringent halal regulations to maintain the quality of their halal meat products.

Anwar, who arrived in Islamabad on Wednesday for a three-day state visit, described his visit as "very meaningful", Bernama reported.

"We (the Malaysia and Pakistan delegations) discussed various issues concerning both countries, from economic zones to issues of trade and markets, among oth-



Meeting of minds: Anwar and Shehbaz in discussion at the Pakistan Prime Minister's official residence in Islamabad. – Bernama

ers," he said at a joint press conference with Shehbaz.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia would also like to see the country's airlines be given more landing rights in Pakistan to facilitate the increased number of tourists, students, trade and commerce between the two countries.

He also noted Pakistan's strong position in condemning the atrocities committed by Israel towards

Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as Tel Aviv's intransigence, which escalated the already tense situation in the Middle East to breaking point.

Shehbaz described Malaysia as a brotherly country to Pakistan, saying that Malaysia's economic achievements and progress were exemplary and must serve as a model for all Muslim countries.

He expressed hope for the

advancement of bilateral ties with Malaysia, established in 1957.

"Malaysia's progress should be emulated by Muslim countries in terms of attracting foreign direct investment, becoming a hub for the semiconductor industry and others," he said.

Anwar and Shehbaz also witnessed the signing of three Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Malaysian and Pakistani government agencies.

The first MOU was signed between the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), while the second was between the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) and the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority on developing the digital sector.

The third MOU was between the Transport Ministry and Pakistan's Ministry of Aviation.

Both leaders then witnessed the launch of selected works by renowned Pakistani poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal, which were translated into Bahasa Melayu and the Madani Malaysia book

into Urdu.

The trade value between both countries in 2023 was RM6.43bil, with exports from Malaysia to Pakistan totalling RM4.39bil while Malaysia's imports from Pakistan totalled RM2.04bil. The trade value recorded between the two countries for the first seven months of this year was RM5.1bil.

Meanwhile, Anwar was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy by the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST).

NUST is Pakistan's multi-campus public research university which provides tertiary education to over 10,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students, with its main campus located in Islamabad.

Anwar visited the university to deliver an address titled "Echoes of Iqbal: Charting a Future, of Renewal and Progress" to NUST students and academic staff.