

# Anwar reaches out across borders and regions

VIENTIANE: Malaysia is encouraging strategic collaborations in digital transformation initiatives between Asean and its dialogue partners, Japan and South Korea.

At the Asean-South Korea Summit, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim suggested a digital collaboration between the regional bloc and its dialogue partner, which should include capacity building, upskilling and strategic diversification of human resources.

“As Asean marks the 35th anniversary of Asean-South Korea dialogue relations, Malaysia welcomes the establishment of the Asean-South Korea comprehensive strategic partnership,” said Anwar, whose talking points were made available by the Prime Minister’s Office.

South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol attended the summit.

Anwar also said that Malaysia supported the peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula, including the initiative that was announced on Aug 15.

**“I have also given my views on the EU Deforestation Regulation that is directly affecting the nation’s palm oil industry.”**

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

According to media reports, Yoon unveiled a vision for unification with North Korea, pledging to expand outside information in the reclusive nation and proposing an official dialogue channel that can “take up any issue”.

Anwar also attended the Asean-Japan Summit, which was attended by newly-minted Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba.

At the meeting, Anwar stressed the need to strengthen cooperation on supply chains and the advancement of artificial intelligence between the 10-member bloc and Japan.

During the Asean-Australia

Summit, Malaysia called for enhanced cooperation in human capital development, including cybersecurity and artificial intelligence, with a strong focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) education.

At the Asean-India Summit, Malaysia stressed the early conclusion of the review on Asean-India Trade in Goods Agreement, to further enhance the business environment and consolidate two-way trade and investment.

It was a packed day for the Prime Minister, who, aside from attending back-to-back summits with Asean dialogue partners,

also held bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the 44th and 45th Asean Summits and Related Summits.

At a bilateral meeting with EU Council President Charles Michel, Anwar said strategic cooperation between Asean and the European Union would be enhanced during Malaysia’s chairmanship of the regional bloc next year.

He also expressed Malaysia’s intentions of resuming talks on the Free Trade Agreement with the EU.

“I have also given my views on the EU Deforestation Regulation that is directly affecting the nation’s palm oil industry,” he said.

Anwar also held bilateral meetings with Canada’s Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and newly-appointed Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra.

On the Prime Minister’s meeting with Trudeau, Anwar said Malaysia welcomed the establishment of the BlackBerry Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence and efforts to strengthen cooperation

in cybersecurity.

“Malaysia looks forward to the early conclusion of the MOU (memorandum of understanding) on defence cooperation.

“We have also requested a waiver of visa requirements on a reciprocal basis,” he added.

During his bilateral meeting with the Thai Prime Minister, Anwar congratulated Paetongtarn on her appointment.

“Malaysia reiterates its readiness to continue the momentum and policy laid down by former Thai prime minister Srettha Thavisin, including connectivity and people-to-people relations,” he said.

Anwar also expressed condolences on the recent flooding that had affected the people in north, northeast and central Thailand.

Anwar also received a courtesy call from US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who arrived in Vientiane yesterday.

Today, the Asean chairmanship will be handed over to Malaysia at the conclusion of the Asean Summit.