

M'sia vows inclusivity, sustainability

PM: Asean will also explore and broaden economic partnerships beyond its borders

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VIENTIANE: Malaysia has officially taken over the Asean chairmanship for 2025, pledging to create a more inclusive and sustainable regional bloc during her stewardship.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Malaysia has chosen the theme "Inclusivity and Sustainability" to reflect her aspirations for shared progress that ensures no one is left behind.

"It conveys our hope that the steps we take today will endure in the long run.

"It underscores our determination to keep the future firmly inside as we move forward," Anwar said in his remarks at the handing over of the Asean chairmanship from Laos to Malaysia.

Malaysia's term as Asean chair will begin on Jan 1 next year. The last time Malaysia held the regional grouping chairmanship was in 2015.

Stating that Asean's journey, which began almost six decades ago, was inspired by a vision of



Ready for Chairmanship: The Asean 2025 logo was revealed at the end of the Asean Summit in Laso. - Bernama

peace, stability and prosperity, Anwar said today that the grouping stands strong and ready to embrace the future with confidence.

Asean's future, the Prime Minister stated, must include Timor-Leste.

"Timor-Leste's inclusion will expand our region's economy and

contribute to fulfilling our grand vision," he said.

Anwar said while there would be continuous efforts to strengthen the region internally, Asean would also proceed to explore and broaden economic partnerships beyond its borders.

The convening of the Asean-Gulf Cooperation Council + China

Summit to be held next year would achieve exactly this, he added.

"Above all, Asean will be unflinching in safeguarding Southeast Asia as a peaceful, stable and prosperous region," he said.

Describing 2025 as a momentous chapter for Asean, the Prime Minister said it would be a time rich with significance and prom-

ises, citing the 10th anniversary of the Asean Community.

"And with it, we will embrace a new landmark, the Asean Community Vision 2045, charting the course for our shared future for the next two decades.

"On behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia, I look forward to welcoming you all. Selamat datang ke Malaysia," the Prime Minister said at the conclusion of his remarks.

Earlier, Anwar received the baton of the Asean chairmanship from Laos Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone.

After the Prime Minister had delivered his speech, a video montage introducing Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean 2025 was played.

The Asean 2025 logo was unveiled at the event.

Speaking to the Malaysian media, Anwar said Malaysia would assist the process for Timor-Leste to be accepted as a full member of the regional bloc, but noted that the latter country still has several conditions to fulfil.

"Most of the constraints are over economic regulations. We will get Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz to assist in getting several pre-conditions approved," he said.