

Thai role in border projects praised



Fruitful collaboration: Paetongtarn greeting Anwar at the Government House in Bangkok during his two-day working visit. - Bernama

PM: Leadership a boon for stronger bilateral ties

BANGKOK: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has thanked the Thai government for its commitment in advancing Malaysia-Thailand border projects.

Anwar, who is on a working visit to Thailand, also thanked Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra for her commitment to deepening Malaysia-Thailand bilateral relations.

"These (border) projects have been longstanding and under your leadership, they have been realised," he said in response to Paetongtarn's remarks at the start of a bilateral meeting between the Prime Minister and his Thai counterpart.

Anwar said he and Paetongtarn welcomed progress on existing agreements, particularly efforts to boost economic growth in northern Malaysia and southern Thailand.

"With Thailand now Malaysia's sixth largest trading partner and total trade exceeding US\$25bil

(RM110bil) last year, these initiatives will help us reach our US\$30bil (RM132bil) goal by 2027.

"To this end, we agreed to accelerate key projects, including the new Rantau Panjang-Sungai Golok bridge and flood mitigation works along Sungai Golok," he said in a Facebook post.

The two leaders also witnessed the signing of an agreement for the construction of the Friendship Bridge between the two governments.

The memorandum of understanding was inked by Works Minister Datuk Seri Alexander Nanta Linggi and Thai Transport Suriya Juangroongruangkit on behalf of the respective governments.

The construction of the new bridge and the upgrading of the existing bridge linking Rantau Panjang and Sungai Golok is expected to be completed by 2028.

The Prime Minister said his discussion with Paetongtarn also touched on the US tariffs.

"We reaffirmed our shared commitment to addressing the issue collectively through Asean, guided by dialogue and a sustainable, fair approach," Anwar said.

In her welcoming remarks, Paetongtarn also expressed her gratitude to Anwar for the visit, which aims to further enhance bilateral cooperation between Thailand and Malaysia.

"We will continue to collaborate and assist each other on various issues affecting the world today," she said.

This is Anwar's second trip to Thailand since assuming office in 2022. The first was in 2023, during which he met then prime minister Prayut Chan-o-cha.