

M'sia secures extension of Myanmar ceasefire

BANGKOK: Myanmar leaders have pledged to extend the ceasefire and ensure the safety of humanitarian workers, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said Myanmar State Administration Council chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Prime Minister of Myanmar's Unity Government Mahn Win Khaing Than gave this assurance at separate discussions he held with both parties during his working visit to Thailand.

"I appealed to both leaders to ensure peace, avoid new conflicts and reduce military presence. These are essential for the success of humanitarian efforts.

"The indication I received from both is that they are committed to extending the ceasefire.

"This is a precondition imposed by all parties involved in humanitarian operations," Anwar told reporters at the end of his two-day visit.

The Prime Minister stated he would inform his fellow Asean leaders to enhance regional coordination and facilitate the involvement of more personnel from member countries in relief operations.



Virtual meet: Anwar (right) speaking to Mahn on Myanmar's humanitarian needs. - Picture from Anwar's Facebook page

"They have pledged to honour their commitments. There will be a ceasefire and no unnecessary provocations. Otherwise, the entire humanitarian exercise could fail," he said.

Anwar also welcomed recent measures taken to ease tensions, including the release of nearly 4,900 detainees.

Myanmar state media reported

that the military government granted amnesty to these prisoners to mark the country's traditional new year.

"It is a very positive sign of goodwill, which may allow Asean to engage with them more meaningfully.

"During my discussions, I stressed the importance of a ceasefire and enabling humanitarian

efforts to cover all of Myanmar, regardless of the regions or political affiliations involved. I received assurances to this effect," he said.

On Friday, Anwar met Min, with former Thai prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra also present. Yesterday, he held a virtual meeting with Mahn to discuss Myanmar's humanitarian needs.