

Working together for Muslim unity

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Maldives President Dr Mohamed Muizzu have reaffirmed their shared commitment to promoting the unity of the ummah and upholding the core principles of Islam.

In a joint statement issued following their meeting here yesterday, both leaders stressed that global issues, including the longstanding Palestinian conflict, should be resolved through peaceful means with full respect for international law and United Nations resolutions.

"Anwar and Muizzu also addressed critical international issues, particularly the ongoing conflicts affecting Muslims across the world and the dire humanitarian situation in Myanmar due to the devastating earthquake.

"Both leaders also highlighted the importance of a just and lasting solution to the challenges in bringing peace and stability in the region," according to the statement, Bernama reported.

Muizzu, who arrived on Sunday on a four-day official visit to Malaysia, was earlier accorded an official welcome at the Perdana Putra Complex here.

Anwar and Muizzu also expressed strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, reaffirming their commitment to reject terrorism and bring all perpetrators to justice.

"Both sides also agreed to continue sharing information and best practices to address the challenges posed by terrorism and other traditional and non-traditional

threats," it added.

The leaders further discussed the importance of fostering people-to-people connections, including enhancing cooperation between higher education institutions in Malaysia and the Maldives.

They reaffirmed their commitment to creating more opportunities for students, particularly through the relaxation of visa regimes, to pursue higher education in each other's country.

Both leaders also acknowledged the ongoing success of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) in strengthening bilateral ties.

At a joint press conference with Muizzu, Anwar said Malaysia and the Maldives share common aspirations in upholding international commitments and working toward ending the genocide in Palestine.

Anwar praised Muizzu's bold decision to bar Israeli passport holders from entering the Maldives, calling it a courageous and principled stand against ongoing violence.

The Prime Minister said Malaysia has never recognised Israel since its independence, mainly because of Israel's refusal to respect human rights, honour international commitments and end the genocidal acts in Palestine, especially in Gaza.

"We (Malaysia and the Maldives) share the same sentiments and aspirations, and I have expressed on behalf of the government and the people of Malaysia that we certainly accord him (Maldives President) with high respect and accolades for his courage and principled stance," Anwar said.

Muizzu also expressed deep gratitude to the Malaysian government for its generous assistance in building human capital in the Maldives, particularly through the MTCP.

"The MTCP has contributed immensely to the capacity building of our civil servants over the years," he said.

The MTCP, established in 1980 as Malaysia's contribution to the South-South Cooperation initiative, is conducted through the sharing of Malaysia's development experiences and expertise with other developing countries.

Muizzu also acknowledged the over 600 scholarship opportunities extended by Malaysian higher education institutions to Maldivian students and praised Malaysia's supportive visa arrangements, particularly the Guardian Visa.

He said both countries are working to expedite and conclude several memoranda of understanding, particularly in defence and other strategic sectors.

He praised Malaysia's leadership in the halal industry and digital economy, noting that the Maldives is eager to explore collaboration in emerging technological fields.

Muizzu also highlighted the Maldives' commitment to climate action, including its target to generate 33% of its energy from renewable sources by 2028 and the planting of five million trees.

He also expressed full support for Malaysia's Asean chairmanship this year, emphasising the importance of deepening bilateral ties through high-level exchanges and cooperation.