

# KL, DHAKA INK 8 AGREEMENTS

Both countries also pledge to work closely to resolve Rohingya crisis

IYLIA MARSYA ISKANDAR  
KUALA LUMPUR  
iyliaamarsya@nst.com.my

Malaysia and Bangladesh have signed eight new co-operation agreements spanning defence, energy, education, trade and the halal ecosystem, and pledged to work closely on resolving the Rohingya refugee crisis and restoring peace in Myanmar.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus reaffirmed the deep ties between the two nations during bilateral talks at the Perdana Putra Complex here yesterday, following an official welcome ceremony attended by senior ministers, foreign diplomats, and military honours from the First Battalion of the Royal Ranger Regiment.

On regional issues, Anwar expressed concern over the "enormous burden" borne by Bangladesh in hosting hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees.

Peace in Myanmar is a great priority," he said. "We must ensure humanitarian assistance reaches the refugees and victims of conflict and natural disasters. The suffering has gone on far too long."

He said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan would coordinate a joint Asean team with counterparts from Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand to visit Myanmar in the coming weeks, with the aim of ending atrocities against ethnic minorities and restoring stability.

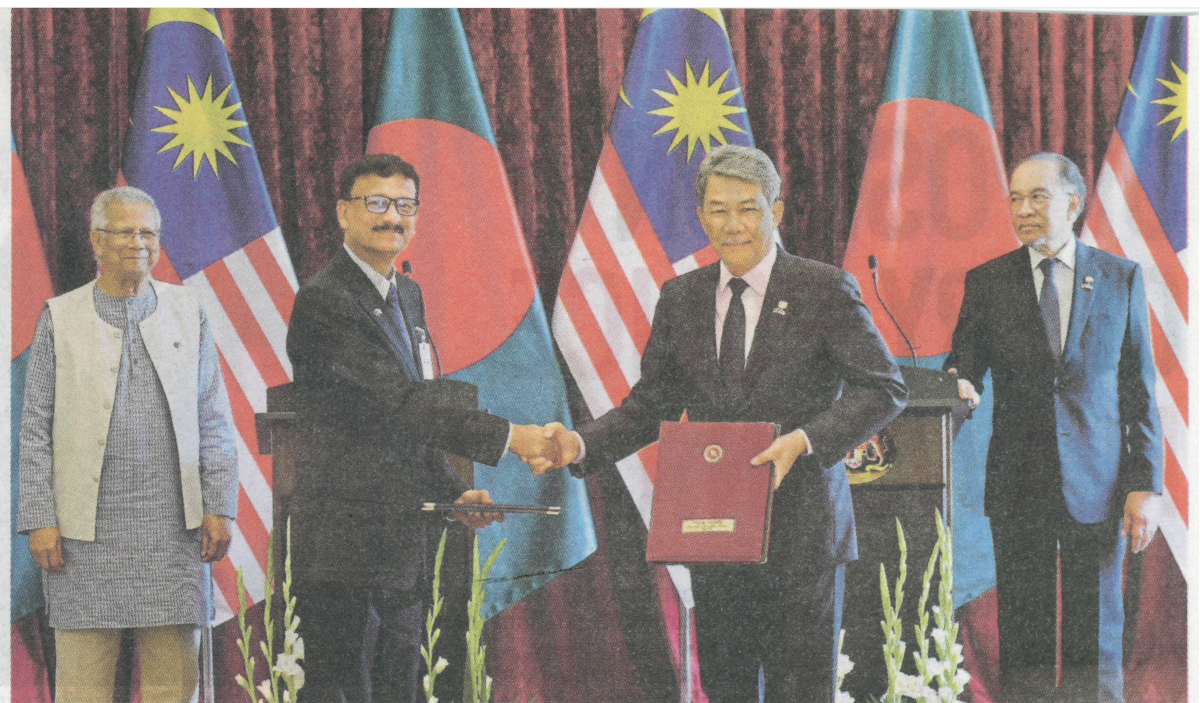
Yunus, who is on a three-day official visit, thanked Malaysia for its support, describing the country as "a second home" for many Bangladeshis.

"We are grateful Malaysia has welcomed so many of our people," he said.

"We hope this door will remain open, and even wider, so that more of our young people can work here, learn skills and return home to start their own businesses."

The two leaders also discussed labour issues, with Anwar announcing measures to help stranded Bangladeshi workers and facilitate multiple-entry visas to allow them to visit their families.

"Bangladesh is not just a source of labour, it is an important economic partner," said Anwar, noting the ongoing collabora-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus (left) witnessing the exchange of documents between Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan (second from right) and Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain in Putrajaya yesterday.  
BERNAMA PIC

tions with Petronas in energy projects and Axiata in telecommunications.

"We now aim to strengthen co-operation in halal industries, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education, research, and semiconductor development."

The memoranda of understanding signed yesterday included defence cooperation to enhance military training; technology sharing; regional security and energy partnerships, including liquefied natural gas supply and infrastructure development; halal economy collaboration, focusing on certification and trade expansion; education and labour cooperation, including academic exchanges, vocational training and strategic research partnerships between think-tanks in both countries; semiconductor capacity-build-

ing initiatives and enhanced trade promotion.

Yunus, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate renowned for his work in microcredit and poverty alleviation, also sought Malaysia's backing in the run-up to Bangladesh's elections and on global advocacy for the Rohingya issue, particularly during Malaysia's Asean chairmanship in 2025.

"Bangladesh has the human resources and technology to offer. We want Malaysian investment to help build a sustainable, high-growth economy," he said, adding that Anwar had been "a friend at our hour of need" during past national challenges.

Dr Yunus will deliver a public lecture and receive an Honorary Doctor of Philosophy in Social Business from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia today, before meeting members of the Yunus Social Business Centre and its

university network.

In 2024, bilateral trade between Malaysia and Bangladesh rose 5.1 per cent to RM13.35 billion.

Malaysia's key exports to Bangladesh include petroleum products, palm oil and chemicals, while imports comprise textiles, footwear and manufactured goods.

Since establishing diplomatic ties in 1972, the two nations have built what Anwar described as "a partnership of equals, grounded in trust, shared aspirations and the belief that together, we can do more for our peoples and our region".

Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim with Chief Adviser to the Government of Bangladesh, Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus, at the Perdana Putra building yesterday.