

# Malaysia may soon have dedicated Law Ministry

Access to justice must not be confined to elites but extended to every citizen, especially the poor and marginalised: Anwar

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** As part of sweeping reforms to restore integrity, fairness and trust in the legal system as envisaged by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, a dedicated Law Ministry could soon be a reality.

Anwar said the move would bring greater coherence to the legal system and position Malaysia to engage more effectively with regional partners in advancing the rule of law.

"Such reforms are not abstract but vital to ensure Asean's relevance in a rapidly changing world. By aligning with regional best practices, Malaysia will be better placed to shape a more just and responsive order," he said at the closing of the Asean Law Forum 2025.

Anwar said Malaysia's chosen theme "Inclusivity and Sustainability" as Asean chair, is not a slogan but a genuine pledge to ensure

that no one is left behind.

He said access to justice must not be confined to the elites but extended to every citizen, especially the poor and marginalised.

"Justice must be accessible to all. Too often, the vulnerable are sidelined and denied due process. True development means that education, healthcare and the legal system must all be inclusive.

"Sustainability, meanwhile, is about building institutions that endure, rooted in integrity, fairness and public trust."

He urged Asean nations to expand mutual legal assistance, strengthen dispute resolution mechanisms and address emerging challenges such as digital governance and artificial intelligence.

"Dialogue and principled diplomacy have always been Asean's way. Strengthening mediation, arbitration and conciliation is not only about legal processes but also about

ensuring stability and the rule of law."

He stressed the importance of a strong legal and judicial system as the backbone of a free, independent and democratic nation.

He added that ongoing reforms are essential to reinforce the rule of law and "end the era of arrogance and abuse of power within the executive, judiciary and legislature!"

"Political arrogance in the past weakened our legal institutions and even tainted the judiciary with corruption and abuse."

He praised Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said for her persistent push for change, describing her initiatives with the Attorney-General's Chambers as "historic reforms that will restore confidence and dismantle perceptions of abuse of power'."

On regional peace, Anwar commended the leaders of Laos and Cambodia for agreeing to a ceasefire following recent tensions, calling it a triumph of diplomacy and a testament to Asean's spirit of consensus and respect.

He said Asean's quiet but firm approach to conflict resolution is "a model for maintaining peace and stability'."



Anwar and Azalina at the Asean Law Forum held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday. - BERNAMAPIC