

Three pacts inked with Singapore

SINGAPORE: Malaysia and Singapore signed cross-border transport, drug enforcement and public health accords at the 12th Annual Leaders' Retreat yesterday.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his counterpart, Lawrence Wong, witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on enhanced cooperation in combating illicit trafficking of narcotics.

The MoU was inked by Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail and Singapore Home Minister K. Shanmugam.

Under the MoU, Malaysia and Singapore will step up joint efforts against drug trafficking.

The agreement covers narcotics and psychotropic substances, including, their analogues and precursor chemicals.

Both countries will also share intelligence, coordinate operations and strengthen enforcement against cross-border drug rings.

The move strengthens the long-running cooperation between Malaysia and Singapore against regional drug syndicates.

When asked if capital punishment for drug offences was raised, given that several Malaysians had been executed in Singapore, Anwar said Malaysia maintained a firm stance against

drug crimes.

"When Malaysian citizens face legal proceedings abroad, including in Singapore, Malaysia always respects the due process and judicial independence of the respective countries.

"I am not suggesting that families cannot appeal. These cases should not be politicised or exaggerated," he added.

Wong said capital punishment was not discussed.

"We hope all countries will understand the rationale behind our strong stance and respect how we implement our policies on this issue," he said.

On healthcare, both countries

agreed to deepen cooperation in research and policy exchange.

The agreement covers digital health, health financing, public health, long-term care and healthy ageing.

Cross-border visits by experts and officials, along with the sharing of knowledge and best practices, will also be part of the collaboration.

The third agreement was to finalise the co-located Immigration and Customs facilities for the Johor Baru-Singapore Rapid Transit System Link.

Anwar said there were differences between the two countries, but "there's no hostility".