



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his Singapore counterpart, Lawrence Wong (right), witnessing Malaysian Transport Minister Anthony Loke (second from left) and Singapore Transport Minister Jeffrey Siow exchanging documents after signing an additional agreement on the Johor Baru-Singapore Rapid Transit System Link. BERNAMA PIC

JB-SINGAPORE RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM

PM: PACT INKED ON RTS CROSS-BORDER CHECKS

Passengers can clear Customs and Immigration of both Malaysia, Singapore in a single location

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MALAYSIA and Singapore yesterday signed an additional agreement on the Johor

Baru-Singapore Rapid Transit System (RTS) Link.

The agreement finalises the co-located Immigration and Customs facilities for the cross-border rail line connecting Bukit Chagar in Johor Baru to Woodlands North in Singapore.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and his Singapore counterpart, Lawrence Wong, witnessed the signing during the 12th Singapore-Malaysia Annual Leaders' Retreat at the Ritz-Carlton Millenia here.

The agreement was signed by Transport Minister Anthony Loke and his Singapore counterpart Jeffrey Siow.

RTS trains will run every few minutes during peak hours, carrying up to 10,000 passengers per hour in each direction. It is slated to begin operations next year.

The co-located Immigration and Customs facilities enable travellers to clear both countries'

checks in a single location.

"We are confident that the project, slated to ease chronic congestion at the Causeway, holds tremendous potential to expand economic ties between both nations," Anwar told Malaysian journalists after the retreat.

He added that his closed-door meeting with Wong also discussed improvements to cross-border taxi services.

Anwar noted that good progress had been made on the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone (JS-SEZ) and confirmed Malaysia's agreement for Singapore to open consulates in Sabah and Sarawak.

In a joint press conference earlier, Wong said opening the consulates in Sabah and Sarawak "will enable us to offer consular support to Singaporeans living there and further strengthen the already strong bonds between our people".

The proposal was first discussed at the previous leaders' retreat in Putrajaya in January.

Singapore currently has two diplomatic missions in Malaysia, a high commission in Kuala Lumpur and a consulate in Johor Baru, which was established in 2009.

Both leaders also discussed long-standing disputes over airspace, water pricing and maritime boundaries.

Anwar described the annual meeting as a crucial platform to build stronger relations with Singapore as an Asean partner and immediate neighbour.

Wong said bilateral talks had

advanced through multiple rounds.

"We have differences in views and matters that are not easy to resolve, but as good neighbours, we will continue engaging in good faith," he said.

On water supply, Wong said both sides had opened discussions on the price of raw and treated water under a 1962 agreement, while working to safeguard Sungai Johor's water quality and resilience against extreme weather.

He added that Singapore had approved imports of low-carbon electricity from Sarawak, and both sides were exploring a second interconnector to expand cross-border power trade. The move is a key step towards realising the Asean power grid by 2045.

Malaysia and Singapore also agreed to step up joint action against drug trafficking, including deeper intelligence sharing on production, abuse, smuggling methods and illicit diversion.

This is the second retreat attended by both leaders, coinciding with the 60th anniversary of Malaysia-Singapore diplomatic ties.

The last retreat was held in Putrajaya in January, where both sides endorsed the JS-SEZ agreement and pledged to deepen cooperation in education, shared heritage and energy.

Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim with his Singapore counterpart, Lawrence Wong, at a press conference in the republic yesterday.