

50 YEARS OF RELATIONS

PM's Bahrain visit to boost ties

MANAMA (Bahrain): Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's three-day official visit to Bahrain, from today, will strengthen Malaysia's 50-year diplomatic ties with the nation.

This marks Anwar's first visit to Bahrain as prime minister and comes at the invitation of Crown Prince Sheikh Salman Hamad al-Khalifa, who is also the country's prime minister.

Anwar will be accompanied by Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Dr Zulkifli Hasan and senior government officials.

Malaysia's ambassador to Bahrain Shazryll Zahiran said Anwar was expected to discuss the development and progress of bilateral relations during his meeting with the crown prince.

Among areas of discussion are strengthening cooperation in key sectors of mutual interest, such as trade and investment, defence, food security, Islamic banking, halal industries, connectivity and tourism, as well as regional and global issues.

"As Asean chair, the prime minister will also extend an invitation to the crown prince to attend the second Asean-GCC Summit and the Asean-GCC+ China Summit," he said at a media briefing here.

Anwar will also meet Bahrain's Finance and Economy Minister Shaikh Salman Khalifa Al Khalifa to discuss potential economic collaborations between the two countries.

During the visit, Anwar will participate in the Intra-Islamic Dialogue Conference (IIDC) and deliver a keynote speech at the conference's main session.

"IIDC is organised by three Islamic organisations: Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (Bahrain) and the Muslim Council of Elders, with 298 religious leaders from 75 countries attending," said Shazryll.

Anwar is scheduled to attend a dinner with the Malaysian diaspora in Bahrain.

"This historic visit to Bahrain is significant in reflecting the strong ties between the two countries," Shazryll added. **Bernama**