



WARM WELCOME... Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim accompanying Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu during a guard-of-honour mounted by the First Battalion of the Royal Ranger Regiment at Bangunan Perdana Putra in Putrajaya yesterday. - **BERNAMAPIC**

PM slams those advising him 'not to travel too much'

> Trips overseas have done much to attract investments needed to create job opportunities, improve nation's economic capabilities, says Anwar

HANOI: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has hit out at those who advised him "not to travel too much", saying that they are clearly unaware of the hard work he has done to attract investments to Malaysia.

He said as a trading nation, Malaysia needs investments because, without them, the country cannot create job opportunities and improve the economic capabilities of the country.

"Investments can help accelerate development. Some people ask do I need to keep travelling abroad. Some simply say I shouldn't travel too much.

"They don't know that I usually travel and reach the destination in the evening. Even before checking in to a hotel, I have to attend a couple of meetings plus pre-council meetings with ambassadors. From 7am onwards, there will be several bilateral meetings for me to attend. That's what I do, and when I return, I go straight to work

"I don't even take a day off to play golf," Anwar told the Malaysian media after delivering a keynote address at the 2nd Asean Future Forum here.

The forum was also attended by his counterpart Pham Minh Chinh of Vietnam, Christopher Luxon of New Zealand and Timor-Leste President Jose Ramos Horta.

Anwar arrived here at 7.10pm on Tuesday on his two-day working visit and paid a courtesy call on Communist Party of Vietnam General Secretary To Lam at the party's headquarters.

Anwar and Lam spent about 30 minutes discussing various matters related to bilateral diplomatic relations.

He also paid a courtesy call on Timor-Leste President Jose Ramos-Horta later that evening to discuss similar matters related to bilateral relations.

Anwar then chaired a pre-council meeting with the Malaysian delegation before ending his busy day.

As early as 7.30am (local time) on Wednesday, Anwar led the Malaysian delegation in a breakfast meeting with the Vietnamese delegation led by Chinh, where issues of common interest were discussed.

He then rushed to deliver the keynote address at the Asean Future Forum, before holding an exit media conference with the

Malaysian media.

Before departing for home, Anwar managed to pay a courtesy call on Vietnam President Luong Cuong.

He also said the leaders of South Africa and China would be visiting Malaysia in March and April, respectively.

He added that when Chinese President Xi Jinping arrives, he would be accompanied by a big delegation of business people to explore (business and trade) opportunities.

Meanwhile, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Abdul Aziz said Malaysia had recorded approved investments totalling RM378.5 billion in 2024, the highest in the country's history.

He said this is an increase of 14.9% year-on-year, involving 6,700 projects across key sectors, Bernama reported.

He added that the investments are expected to create more than 207,000 new jobs, thus strengthening Malaysia's position as a leading investment destination.

Tengku Zafrul said Malaysia continued to attract significant investments despite ongoing global economic challenges, with domestic investments of RM208.1 billion (55%) and foreign investments amounting to RM170.4 billion (45%).

He said strategic investments came from five major countries, namely the United States (RM32.8 billion), Germany (RM32.2 billion), China (RM28.2 billion), Singapore (RM27.3 billion) and Hong Kong (RM7.4 billion).