

# PM ADVANCES ASEAN AGENDA IN UAE

**Anwar can share Malaysia's stand at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, says envoy**



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**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's visit to Abu Dhabi will present Malaysia with an opportunity to expound its status as Asean chair to a wider, global audience.

Malaysian ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Tengku Datuk Sirajuzzaman Tengku Mohamed Ariffin said the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week (ADSW) 2025 marks the first global forum where Anwar can state Malaysia's stand and direction as chair of the bloc.

"The prime minister's participation with that of other leaders at ADSW 2025 is significant, given that Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean bears the theme 'Inclusivity and Sustainability'.

"As the 2025 Asean chair, he will also explore opportunities to strengthen regional cooperation, especially in the context of Asean's role in promoting sustainable development and green innovation in Southeast Asia," he told Malaysian media yesterday.

ADSW 2025, the first major event in the global sustainability calendar, will see leaders from Europe, Africa, Central Asia and other regions gather to discuss ways to accelerate the transition to a sustainable economy and find solutions for socio-economic growth.

Anwar's visit to the UAE from Jan 12 to 14 is at the invitation of UAE Vice-President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed Rashid Al Maktoum.

Anwar is accompanied by Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Na-



Malaysian ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Tengku Datuk Sirajuzzaman Tengku Mohamed Ariffin speaking with Malaysian media in Abu Dhabi yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

sution Ismail; Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz; Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Zambry Abd Kadir and senior government officials.

Anwar will begin his visit today with an audience with the Dubai ruler, followed by meetings with corporate figures from the UAE's largest companies to discuss potential investment opportunities.

Anwar's last visit to the UAE in October 2023 saw Malaysia secure investment commitments totalling RM40.6 billion.

Tomorrow, he will have an audience with UAE President and Ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed Zayed Al Nahyan.

Anwar will witness the signing of the Malaysia-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Cepa), attend the ADSW opening ceremony and the Zayed Sustainability Prize awards ceremony with global leaders.

He will participate in a plenary session and engage in a dialogue titled "Asean Interconnected Future: Linking Energy, Trade & Prosperity".

Sirajuzzaman said Anwar's audience with the Abu Dhabi ruler and his Emirati counterpart will see them discuss strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing cooperation. He said apart from regional and global issues of importance, the discussions would touch on key sectors, such as renewable energy, food and energy security, artificial intelligence and data centres.

On Cepa, he said the agreement will open new avenues for trade, investment and economic cooperation between both countries.

Likening it to a free-trade agreement, he said it would focus on boosting and facilitating trade between the UAE and Malaysia.

"Negotiations have been ongoing for some time, spearheaded by the International Trade and Industry Ministry. It concluded last year. This is significant for Malaysia-UAE relations."

From January to November in 2024, Malaysia's trade with the UAE reached RM39.53 billion.

In 2023, UAE was Malaysia's second largest trading partner in the Middle East, with total trade valued at RM39.63 billion.

Malaysia was UAE's fourth largest trading partner among Asean member states and the 32nd largest globally.

Sirajuzzaman said the UAE was open to engaging with Malaysia on a host of issues.

"Some firm decisions have been made on cooperation and will proceed. Some things are still being discussed, but will be announced soon. We can expect even more visits and a higher level of cooperation in the future."

On potential areas of cooperation, he said data centres and AI would continue to be a focus.

"It's just a question of where this cooperation will take place. The UAE is highly advanced in AI use and has moved towards practical applications, such as in disaster management and agriculture."

For example, he said that the Mohamed Bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence in the UAE is 15 years old.

"Using AI is like running a 400m race but starting at the 100m or 200m point. It gives you a clear advantage that Malaysia can capitalise on."