

ANWAR, STARMER DISCUSS ELEVATING RELATIONS

Focus is on economics, defence and education, says prime minister

LONDON

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim met his British counterpart, Keir Starmer, here on Wednesday and they discussed elevating the relations between the countries to a strategic partnership covering all spheres.

"The focus and the fundamentals is of course economics, but also defence and education," he said at No. 10, Downing Street.

Anwar, who is also finance minister, said Malaysian ministers and their British counterparts would immediately set up teams to work together, in the context of not only Malaysia, but also Asean.

Malaysian officials said the leaders discussed cooperation in green energy, artificial intelligence and digitalisation.

"This is the first visit to Europe as Asean chair. I took the available opportunity to express Malaysia's readiness to welcome more investors and form a new economic synergy," said Anwar.

He said during the meeting, he invited Starmer to visit Malaysia.

Part of Anwar's delegation are Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, Plantation and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani and Malaysian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and North-



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer at No. 10, Downing Street in London on Wednesday. BERNAMA PIC

ern Ireland Datuk Zakri Jaafar.

The UK is Malaysia's fourth largest trading partner in Europe, with total trade between reaching RM15.30 billion in the first 11 months of last year.

Starmer told Anwar that the UK and Malaysia had a close and historic relationship and he was delighted to welcome his counterpart to his office.

"Can I extend a warm welcome to you here at Downing Street? To have this opportunity for a meeting just six months into my premiership, it was really important for me.

"Our modern and dynamic partnership is underpinned by areas of shared cooperation, from trade and investment to education, and our ties are stronger than ever."

He said the UK was a great place to do business and he was pleased Malaysian companies continued to invest in the country.

"On top of that, both countries' shared commitment to net zero ambitions and clean energy will support future growth in both our countries.

"As a dialogue partner to Asean, the UK supports Malaysia's 2025 Asean chairmanship. We are com-

mitted to building a strong UK-Asean partnership, underpinned by our respect for Asean's role in maintaining a prosperous, peaceful Indo-Pacific."

The UK and Malaysia share deep defence links. Both countries are part of the Five Power Defence Arrangements, along with Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. **Bernama**

Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim meeting his British counterpart Keir Starmer at No. 10, Downing Street in London on Wednesday.