

'Global leaders eager to join summit in October'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Several world leaders have expressed interest in participating in the 47th Asean Summit in October, said Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

This was conveyed by the prime minister's counterparts during his recent working visits to Italy, France and Brazil.

"We must remain the region's primary anchor for dialogue, just as our dialogue partners must continue to find value in engaging with us.

"Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan has been complaining of a headache because, everywhere we go, leaders are eager to participate (in the summit)," he joked during his keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Asean Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM).

Among the leaders were South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who seek to represent their regions.

The 58th AMM, under Malaysia's 2025 Asean chairmanship theme "Inclusivity and Sustainability", features 24 ministerial-level meetings from July 8 to 11, including engagements with Asean Dialogue Partners and Sectoral Dialogue Partners.

Together with the meetings, Malaysia hosts the Fourth Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD IV).

Co-chaired with Japan and Palestine, it focuses on initiatives to support the reconstruction and development of Gaza and Palestine.

The high-level meetings will gather around 1,500 delegates, including foreign ministers from Asean member states, Timor-Leste, Asean Dialogue Partners, Asean Regional Forum (ARF) participants, Sectoral Dialogue Partners, and senior officials from the Asean Secretariat.

Meanwhile, Anwar called on all Asean member states to support Timor-Leste's accession into the bloc as its 11th member.

He said this was for Asean's future, and that Malaysia has long supported this endeavour.

This comes amid speculation that Myanmar has submitted an official notice opposing Timor-Leste's entry into Asean.

"Malaysia has long supported this aspiration, and we are heartened by the progress made.

"I thank again the secretary-general and the Asean secretariat for facilitating this.

"I urge all member states to continue supporting Timor-Leste's path to full integration, not only into our institutions, but into our shared vision for the region's future," he said.

In May, following the 46th Asean Summit, Anwar had said the bloc would do whatever necessary to ensure that Timor-Leste becomes its 11th member by October.