

PM opening doors to long-term deals with Italian financiers

THE STAR 03 JUL 2025

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ROME: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim began his second working day in Italy with one-on-one business talks with top business and industrial leaders in strategic sectors like defence and energy.

The meeting with Fincantieri and Leonardo, two giant Italian defence firms which took part in the recent Langkawi International Maritime and

Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA), had opened doors to long-term ventures.

"I stressed the importance of government-to-government approach to strengthen Malaysia's role as a hub in maintenance, repair and operations," said the Prime Minister yesterday.

Anwar said the session was vital in maintaining Malaysia's

position as a stable and reliable investment destination.

He met with Fincantieri CEO Pierroberto Folgiero, Leonardo senior marketing and strategic campaign vice-president Tomasso Pani, and ENI CEO Claudio Descalzi, together with PETRONAS president and Group CEO Tan Sri Tengku Muhammad Taufik Tengku Kamadjaja Aziz.

During an interactive session with Anwar moderated by Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz, several Italian company representatives opened up about why they were looking to invest in Malaysia, with one saying it was because the Asian nation was financially stable and its people "easy to work with".

"We have worked with biggies like Abu Dhabi and several cities in China, but Malaysia is almost perfect. It is a hub of the Asia Pacific region and as a country, developed to a very advanced level," he said.

Many attendees agreed, with most lauding the government's efforts in laying down a reliable environment for trade.