

# Anwar, Modi discuss trade boost and IIT campus plan

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**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's meeting with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, held on the sidelines of the 17th BRICS Summit in Brazil on Sunday, focused on trade and investment opportunities as well as the proposed establishment of an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) campus in Malaysia.

"We discussed the significant potential for expanding strategic cooperation between Malaysia and India in various fields, including trade, investment, digital technology and defence," Anwar said in a statement following their meeting.

He also welcomed the interest shown by Indian companies in investing in future-oriented sectors in Malaysia, such as the digital economy, artificial intelligence, renewable energy and the aerospace industry.

"We are also committed to further strengthening people-to-people relations through cooperation in culture, tourism and education, which includes the proposal to set up an IIT campus in Malaysia," he added.

The IITs are a group of premier engineering and technology institutions in India.

Both leaders also emphasised the importance of ensuring regional peace and stability, and expressed support for just and peaceful resolutions to international issues,

➤ Leaders explore deeper ties in tech, defence and education on sidelines of summit

including Palestine and Jammu-Kashmir.

Anwar said Malaysia welcomed efforts to enhance Asean-India relations, with the Asean-India Summit scheduled for October, in line with the spirit of cooperation for mutual benefit.

"May the strong ties between Malaysia and India continue to grow for the benefit and well-being of the people of both nations," he said.

Anwar described the meeting as brief but meaningful and substantial.

The two leaders last met during the 21st Asean-India Summit in Laos last year.

In this latest meeting, Anwar was accompanied by Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz.

Also present was India's Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar.

Malaysia is India's third-largest trading partner in Asean, with total trade valued at US\$20.02 billion (RM84.4 billion) in 2023 to 2024, accounting for about 17% of India's total trade with Asean.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi described Malaysia as vital to India, holding a key place in his country's Vision Mahasagar and Act East Policy.

In a post on his personal X account @narendramodi, Modi said he met Anwar on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Brazil, where they reviewed progress in bilateral relations, including developments since Anwar's visit to India last year.

"Bilateral ties are growing strongly in futuristic sectors like IT, renewable energy and infrastructure. We also discussed how to improve investment and trade relations between our nations," he said.

Modi announced Vision Mahasagar - "Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions" - for the Global South during his visit to Mauritius on March 12.

Anwar arrived in Brazil on Saturday to attend the BRICS Summit, hosted by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Malaysia officially became a BRICS Partner Country on Jan 1 this year. - Bernama