

Guinea-Bissau to become Malaysia's gateway to Africa

NEW STRAITS TIMES 05 JUN 2025 19.6

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia and Guinea-Bissau will strengthen ties by serving as regional gateways to boost trade, investment, and cooperation, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said Malaysia would serve as Guinea-Bissau's gateway to Asean, while Guinea-Bissau would act as Malaysia's entry point into Africa.

"Guinea-Bissau and Malaysia have had very low-key engagements in the past. That's why I think President Umaro's (General Umaro Sissoco Embaló) visit is very significant.

"He envisions working with Malaysia as a base for the Asean region, and we welcome Guinea-Bissau's role in expanding our ties in trade, investment, and other fields.

"He is scheduled to meet Petronas and FGV this evening to explore opportunities in both countries — not just nationally, but as gateways into Africa and the wider region."

Anwar was speaking at a joint press conference held for Embaló's visit.

He said both leaders had discussed cooperation in halal certification, Islamic banking and finance, as well as training oppor-

tunities in semiconductors, oil and gas, and food technology.

"We are ready to offer assistance, as we have done under the MTCP (Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme), a large programme that will be coordinated by Plantations and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Johari Ghani."

Anwar said they also discussed international affairs, adding that Embaló maintained strong ties with the United Arab Emirates, France, Russia, the United States and across Africa.

"I think we, as a trading nation, and with Malaysia's and Asean's policy of centrality, engage with all countries — and this aligns with the position taken by President Umaro.

"This is your second home. My colleagues and the people of Malaysia welcome your initiative to forge a new relationship built on trust and mutual respect.

Embaló pledged his commitment to implementing the discussions, saying he had instructed his foreign minister to work with Malaysia to realise the agreements.

He expressed admiration for Malaysia's achievements in education, healthcare, and industry,

saying Guinea-Bissau hoped to learn from its experience.

"We want to be the key for Malaysia in Africa, and Malaysia can be the key for us — not just in Asia, but in the world," he said.

Malaysia and Guinea-Bissau established diplomatic relations in 1974.

Ties remain cordial, with cooperation on bilateral and multilateral platforms including the United Nations, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, and the Non-Aligned Movement.

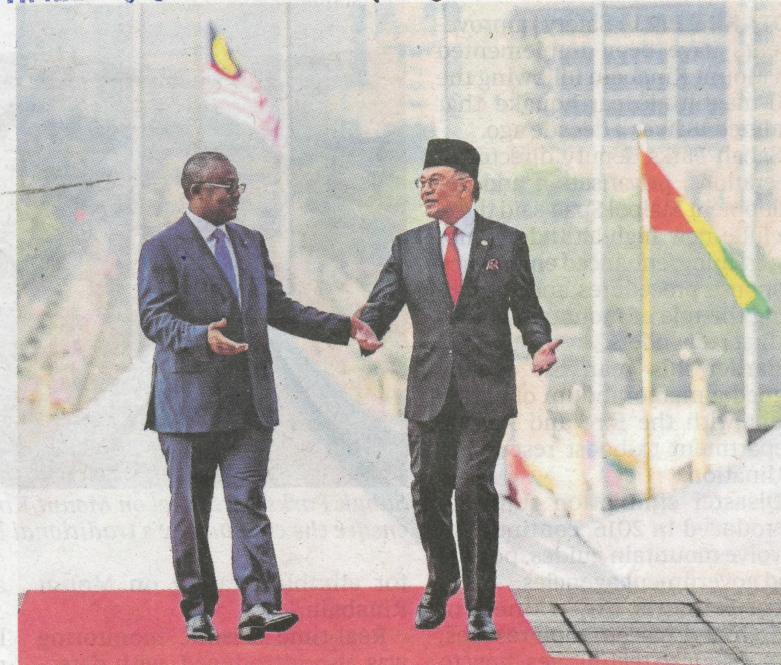
In 2024, total trade with Guinea-Bissau stood at RM4.1 million — with RM4.04 million in exports and RM60,000 in imports.

Earlier, Embaló was accorded an official welcome at the Perdana Putra Complex.

His arrival at 9am was greeted by Anwar.

Present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Fadillah Yusof, Transport Minister Anthony Loke, Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing and Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

Also present were Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Datuk Seri



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim welcoming Guinea-Bissau President General Umaro Sissoco Embaló to Perdana Putra yesterday.

PIC BY AFIQ HAMBALI/PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Dr Zaliha Mustafa and Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan.

Embaló, who is on a four-day visit, inspected a guard of honour mounted by three officers and 103 rank-and-file soldiers of the

First Battalion of the Royal Malay Regiment, led by Major Mohamad Waqiyuddin Abdul Rahman.

This official visit marks his first to Malaysia since assuming office as president in 2020.