

M'sia, Guinea-Bissau deepen ties

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PM: Friendship a gateway to expand presence in Africa

PUTRAJAYA: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has described Malaysia's ties with Guinea-Bissau as a strategic gateway for expanding the nation's presence across the African continent, positioning the West African republic as a vital entry point for trade, investment and diplomatic engagement.

The Prime Minister stated that the strengthening relationship between the two nations represents a pivotal shift in Malaysia's strategy towards Africa.

"It is clear that Guinea-Bissau will be a key country to leverage our positive momentum in West Africa and potentially into the broader African continent," he said at a joint press conference with visiting Guinea-Bissau President Umaro Sissoco Embaló yesterday.

Anwar said he has encouraged Malaysian corporations, including PETRONAS and FGV Holdings, to explore potential ventures in Guinea-Bissau.

"Hopefully, PETRONAS, FGV and others will explore potential opportunities not only in Guinea-

Bissau but also for it to be a base to expand further into Africa and beyond," he added.

While acknowledging that past ties had been low-key, the Prime Minister said the renewed engagement reflects a shared ambition to forge stronger ties in diverse sectors such as the halal industry, Islamic finance, energy and capacity building.

"President Embaló has a vision to engage Malaysia not just bilaterally but as a bridge into Asean," he said, reaffirming Malaysia's commitment to inclusive diplomacy anchored under Asean centrality.

The Prime Minister also welcomed the deepening of ties between the two nations.

"Malaysia will be your second home. My colleagues, the people of Malaysia and I are very pleased that you have taken the initiative to establish a new relationship based on trust and affinity with Malaysia," he told Embaló, *Bernama* reported.

Embaló, in turn, hailed Malaysia as a "sister country" and



All smiles: Anwar and Embaló posing for a group photo during a luncheon at the Seri Perdana Complex in Putrajaya. — Photo taken from Anwar's Facebook page

expressed confidence in the potential for a strong and enduring partnership.

"I believe that starting today, we are not only connected by heart but also ready to work closely on many fronts," he said.

He shared Guinea-Bissau's intention to learn from Malaysia's experience and best practices in various fields, including education, healthcare and industrial development.

"You can count on us. Guinea-Bissau wants to be Malaysia's key partner in Africa, just as Malaysia

can be our key partner not only in Asia but globally," he added.

Embaló is undertaking a three-day official visit to Malaysia, marking the first-ever visit by a head of state from Guinea-Bissau.

Earlier, Embaló was accorded an official welcome ceremony at the Perdana Putra Complex, where he inspected a guard of honour mounted by three officers and 103 members of the First Battalion of the Royal Malay Regiment (ceremonial), led by Major Mohamad Waqiyudin Abd Rahman.

Also present were Deputy

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, Cabinet Ministers, senior government officials and diplomats.

Following the ceremonial protocols, Embaló signed the guest book before proceeding to a bilateral meeting with Anwar.

Malaysia and Guinea-Bissau established diplomatic relations in November 1974.

In 2024, Malaysia's total trade with Guinea-Bissau amounted to RM4.1mil, with exports to Guinea-Bissau valued at RM4.04mil and imports at RM0.06mil.