

# Guinea-Bissau president visit milestone in bilateral relations

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**PETALING JAYA:** Malaysia and Guinea-Bissau are poised to elevate diplomatic ties, with both nations reaffirming a shared commitment to expanding cooperation across a range of key sectors.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim described the official visit by President Umaro Sissoco Embalo as a milestone in bilateral relations, opening the door to new opportunities in trade, investment, education, energy and Islamic finance.

He said the visit also lays the groundwork for broader collaboration between Asean and the West African region.

Embalo was accorded an official welcome at the Perdana Putra Complex yesterday, marking the start of his historic three-day official visit to Malaysia.

This is Embalo's first visit to the country since assuming office in February 2020.

The visit marks a significant step towards enhancing bilateral relations between the two nations, which have maintained diplomatic ties for over five decades.

"Of course, Guinea-Bissau and Malaysia have had very low-key engagements in the past. That's why I think President Umaro's visit is very significant. From our exchanges this

morning (June 4), it is clear that our relationship is growing much closer and more friendly," said Anwar.

Embalo was also scheduled to meet representatives from Petronas and FGV Holdings yesterday to explore potential opportunities in both Malaysia and Guinea-Bissau.

Discussions between both leaders also focused on potential collaboration in key areas, including *halal* products, Islamic finance, education and training as well as in sectors such as semiconductors, oil and gas and food technology.

Anwar said Malaysia stands ready to provide capacity-building support through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, which will be coordinated by Plantations and Commodities Minister Datuk Seri Johari Ghani.

Anwar was speaking at a joint media conference held in conjunction with Embalo's visit.

"We, as a trading nation, and with Malaysia's and Asean's policy of centrality, engage with all countries, and this aligns closely with the position taken by the president.

"I would say that this is going to be your second home, and we, my colleagues and the people of Malaysia, are extremely glad that you have now taken the initiative to forge this new, close relationship based on trust and affinity with Malaysia."



Anwar and Embalo during their meeting at the Perdana Putra complex yesterday. – BERNAMAPIC

Embalo echoed those sentiments, describing his visit as the beginning of a new era in Malaysia-Guinea-Bissau relations.

He expressed confidence that both nations are now "practically connected" and poised to pursue meaningful, long-term cooperation.

He reaffirmed Guinea-Bissau's commitment to implementing the initiatives discussed, and expressed hope that his country could become Malaysia's key partner in Africa.

Embalo also praised Malaysia's achievements in education, healthcare and industrial

development, expressing a strong desire for Guinea-Bissau to learn from Malaysia's experience.

In 2024, total trade between the two countries amounted to RM4.1 million, comprising RM4.04 million in exports and RM60,000 in imports.