

'NEW CHAPTER'

PM, unity minister congratulate Catholics on election of new pope

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has congratulated Catholics on the election of the new pope, Leo XIV.

"This historic occasion marks a new chapter for the global Catholic community," Anwar said on Facebook.

"I am confident it will be a source of renewed purpose and inspiration."

Anwar said Malaysia valued its

ties with the Holy See and looked forward to continued engagement rooted in mutual respect, dialogue and a shared commitment to peace and human dignity.

Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, who was head of the Vatican body which oversaw the appointment of bishops, was elected the next leader of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics.

Prevost, the first American to

rise to the highest position in the Catholic Church, took the papal name Leo XIV.

The 69-year-old succeeds Argentine reformer Pope Francis, who died last month at the age of 88.

Pope Francis, the first pope from Latin America, served for 12 years.

Bernama reported that National Unity Minister Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang also extended his congrat-

ulations to Pope Leo XIV on his election as the 267th pontiff.

He said the appointment was a "momentous occasion", not only for the Catholic faithful but also for people of all religions around the world.

"Your dedication to social justice, inclusivity and compassion reflects the very values that we in Malaysia strive to uphold in our multicultural and multireligious society," he posted on Facebook.

Aaron also offered his prayers for the new pope's leadership, hoping that it would bring a new era of global unity and mutual respect.

"May Almighty God grant you wisdom, strength and grace in leading the global community through these transformative times. Your leadership offers renewed hope for global solidarity, healing and mutual respect."