

# PM STARTS 4-DAY RUSSIA VISIT TODAY

Malaysia seeks to be key partner in the country's engagement with Muslim world

## KUALA LUMPUR

**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim heads to Russia today for a four-day official visit as part of a move to deepen ties between both countries amid shifting geopolitical currents.

The visit, Anwar's second to the country in eight months, is at the invitation of President Vladimir Putin, and is crucial to position Malaysia as a key partner in Russia's expanding engagement with the Islamic world.

Anwar is scheduled to arrive at Moscow's Vnukovo International Airport at 6pm local time today.

He is expected to be welcomed



**MUHAMMED  
AHMAD  
HAMDAN**

by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Malaysia's ambassador to Russia Datuk Cheong Loon Lai, senior officials and Russian representatives, including Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Ryabkov Sergey Alexeevich and Russian ambassador to Malaysia Nail Latypov.

Later tonight, the prime minister is expected to host a dinner for around 100 Malaysians in Russia, including students.

Tomorrow, Anwar will attend a roundtable with Russian captains of industry at Moscow's historic Metropol Hotel, followed by a series of one-on-one meetings.

He is then scheduled to meet

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin at the House of Government.

The Malaysian delegation will have official talks with Putin at the Kremlin, where discussions are expected to focus on trade, education, technological collaboration and expanding cooperation with the Muslim world.

A joint press conference is expected to follow.

Anwar is also scheduled to meet Grand Mufti Sheikh Ravil Gaynutdin, chairman of Russia's Council of Muftis, to deepen Malaysia's engagement with Islamic institutions and communities in Russia.

On Thursday, the prime minister will deliver a public lecture at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Russia's top diplomatic academy, where he will be conferred an honorary doctorate.

The event is expected to highlight Malaysia's long-standing education ties with Russia, which have seen thousands of Malaysians study in Russian uni-

versities, particularly in medicine and engineering.

The second leg of the visit takes Anwar to Kazan, the capital of the Tatarstan, where he is scheduled to meet the rais (head) of the republic and visit the Russia Halal Expo and Kazan Hi-Technology Park.

Anwar will also take part in the Strategic Vision Group: Russia-Islamic World dialogue and deliver a keynote address at the XVI International Economic Forum, "Russia-Islamic World: KazanForum 2025".

Formerly known as KazanSummit, the forum was rebranded in 2023 and has become one of the largest platforms for dialogue between Russia and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation members.

Tatarstan, a constituent republic of the Russian Federation located in the Volga region, is known for its strong economic base, cultural diversity and role as a bridge between Russia and the Islamic world.

With a population made up primarily of Tatars, a Turkic Muslim

ethnic group, and Russians, the republic is regarded as a model for religious and ethnic coexistence.

Malaysia's trade with Russia hit RM14.22 billion in 2023, with its exports led by ball bearings, electrical machinery and rubber products. Russia's main exports to Malaysia include refined petroleum, coal and potassic fertilisers.

The prime minister last visited Russia in September 2024 for the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, where he met Putin and voiced support for multipolar global cooperation.

Malaysia has since become a partner country in BRICS, the emerging-market bloc originally formed by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

The Russia visit is expected to reinforce Malaysia's non-aligned foreign policy while advancing its push for broader economic diplomacy across the Global South, which includes countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Oceania.