

Msia, Pakistan to enhance defence cooperation

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia and Pakistan have reaffirmed their commitment to deepening cooperation across emerging sectors including defence, agriculture, the digital economy, energy and technology-driven industries.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said both countries share longstanding ties since Malaysia's independence in 1957, with collaboration already established in education, culture, defence and trade.

"Our joint aspiration is to further enhance this collaboration in all fields.

"We are in a period of geopolitical uncertainty, so defence, agriculture, digital economy, energy and new technologies such as STEM, ICT, innovation, TVET, E&E and semiconductors are areas we can explore together," he said at a joint press conference with visiting Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here yesterday.

Anwar also expressed appreciation for the contributions of Pakistan's professionals, workers and students in Malaysia, saying their presence has strengthened bilateral relations.

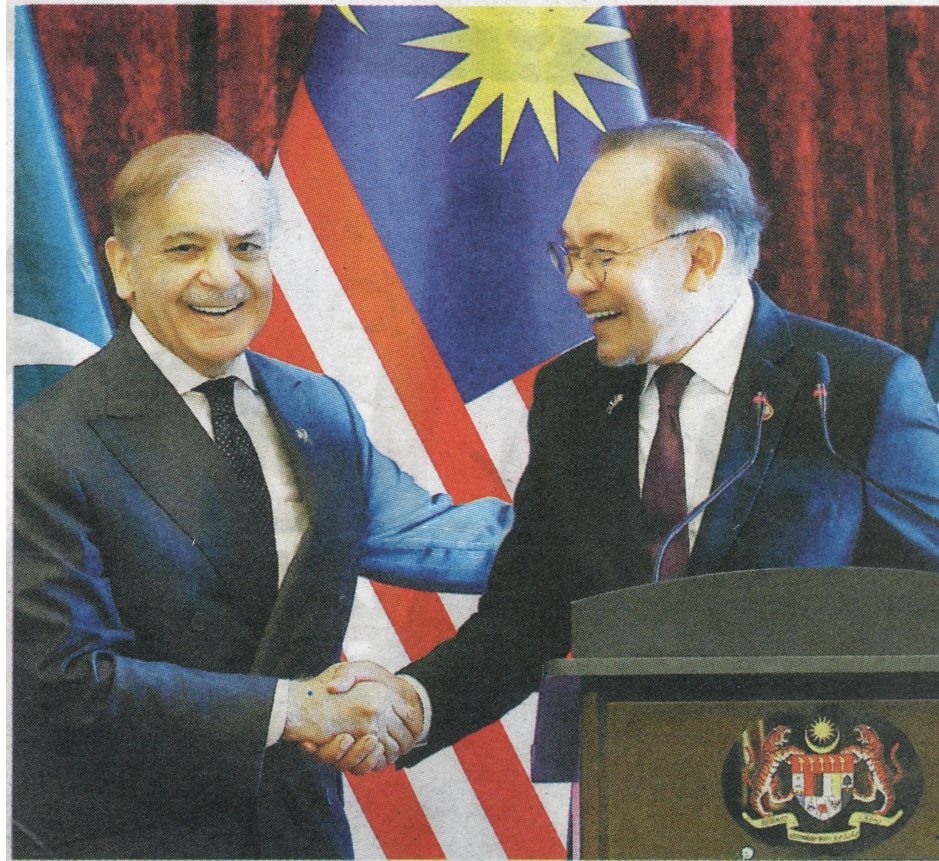
"We value their contribution and will give preference for them to stay and continue contributing here," he said.

Both leaders also exchanged views on regional and international issues, including peace efforts in the India-Pakistan subcontinent and cooperation in combating terrorism.

Anwar said Malaysia's restored political stability will allow more effective collaboration with Pakistan in the future.

Earlier, Shehbaz was accorded an official welcome at the Perdana Putra Complex before attending a bilateral meeting with Anwar. The Pakistani leader, who is on a three-day official visit to Malaysia at Anwar's invitation, was later hosted to a luncheon at Seri Perdana.

Anwar and Shehbaz arrived together at the luncheon, where students from Sekolah Kebangsaan Putrajaya Presint 11(3) greeted them with chants of "Welcome to Malaysia" accompanied by a cultural performance by



Anwar and Shehbaz at the joint press conference yesterday. - **BERNAMAPIC**

dancers from Istana Budaya.

Among those present were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir, Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Tong King Sing, Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar.

According to Wisma Putra, Shehbaz's visit serves as a reciprocal gesture to Anwar's

official visit to Pakistan in October 2024 and reflects the strengthening of Malaysia-Pakistan relations, which were elevated to a Strategic Partnership in March 2019.

In 2024, total trade between both nations rose 25.5% to RM8.07 billion (US1.76 billion), with Malaysia's key exports comprising palm oil, petroleum and chemical products, while imports from Pakistan include agricultural goods, textiles, apparel, footwear and petroleum products. - Bernama