

# Anwar on first official visit to Timor-Leste

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**DILI (TIMOR-LESTE):** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim will embark on his first official visit to Timor-Leste today, reaffirming Malaysia's strong backing for the country's long-standing aspiration to join Asean.

The two-day trip is historic, being the first by a Malaysian prime minister to Dili in 22 years, underscoring Malaysia's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties while supporting Timor-Leste's readiness to become Asean's 11th member.

Anwar is scheduled to arrive at Presidente Nicolau Lobato International Airport at 3pm local time, where he will be received by President Dr Jose Ramos-Horta and Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin and Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil will join the Malaysian delegation.

Malaysian Ambassador to Timor-Leste Datuk Amarjit Singh Sarjit Singh said Anwar's official programme would begin with a ceremonial welcome at the presidential palace, followed by a courtesy call on Ramos-Horta.

He said in the evening Anwar would attend a state banquet hosted jointly by the president and prime minister at Lahane Palace.

He added that the following day Anwar would deliver a keynote address at the National Parliament, hold a bilateral meeting with his counterpart Gusmao at the government palace, witness the exchange of MoUs and take part in a joint media conference.

Anwar is also expected to meet

members of the Malaysian community and alumni of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, deliver a lecture under the Presidential Lecture Series at the Presidential Palace and officiate at the site of the upcoming International Convention Centre in Dili.

Amarjit described the visit as "highly significant" both to reinforce bilateral relations and to highlight Malaysia's role as Asean chair, Bernama reported.

"Malaysia has consistently supported Timor-Leste even before its independence in 2002."

Malaysia-Timor-Leste bilateral trade reached RM85 million in 2024, with about 250 Malaysian companies active in the services, construction and trade sectors. About 150 Malaysians, mainly professionals, entrepreneurs and skilled workers, are currently registered with the Malaysian Embassy in Dili.

Since Aug 16, Malaysians have enjoyed visa-free entry to Timor-Leste in line with Asean integration efforts to ease cross-border movement. Timor-Leste formally applied to join Asean in 2011.