

Visit a strategic effort to boost ties

ANKARA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim underscored the importance of his official visit to Turkiye, calling it a strategic effort to strengthen bilateral ties between Malaysia and the republic, particularly in trade, investment, diplomacy and multi-sectoral cooperation.

Speaking at the *Madani Sentuhan Kasih* gathering with the Malaysian diaspora here on Tuesday, Anwar said the visit carried special significance in view of the close personal and diplomatic ties he had forged with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"This visit is something I truly regard as important. President Erdogan joked that if I did not come in January, he would not want to remain friends."

Anwar said although no official visit had been undertaken previously, he had visited Turkiye on humanitarian and diplomatic grounds, including in the aftermath of the earthquake tragedy in

2023 and to seek support from Islamic countries on Palestine

He said the current visit opened the door to more substantive engagements that would further strengthen bilateral relations.

"InsyaAllah, these meetings will be more meaningful in fostering friendship between the two countries, trade relations, investment and diplomatic cooperation, as well as collaboration in education, security, culture and tourism."

Anwar linked close cooperation with Turkiye, particularly in the defence sector, to cost savings for the country, citing Malaysia's decision to procure littoral combat ships from Turkiye.

He said improvements in governance had allowed Malaysia to place greater focus on people-centric development, including strengthening the role of economic diplomacy.

"In the past, diplomatic relations were purely diplomatic in nature. Now, ambassadors and

officers of the Foreign Ministry are also actively promoting trade, investment and tourism."

He said the results were evident in the increase in investment and trade, as well as tourism performance that surpassed that of several Asean neighbours.

Anwar also touched on people-centric welfare initiatives, including the allocation of RM2 billion to improve Internet access in Sabah and Sarawak, aid for civil servants, RM150 in educational aid for every student and measures to stabilise the cost of living.

He called on all Malaysians, especially the younger generation, to continue supporting the national reform agenda grounded in the values of integrity, knowledge and moral conduct.

"We have a choice — to become the best or to fall because of corruption. Our commitment is to choose the best for ourselves, our families, our communities and our country."