

Thailand, Malaysia agree to turn shared border into trade zone

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PUTRAJAYA – Thailand and Malaysia have agreed to turn the border shared between them into a trade zone, benefitting the people on both sides, said Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin.

During a joint press conference with his Malaysian counterpart, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, held on Wednesday here, Srettha, who is on his inaugural two-day working visit, said the national security of northern Malaysia and southern Thailand is of great concern.

“One of the issues discussed is on the national security of northern Malaysia and southern Thailand. We both agreed to turn the border into a trade zone and to bring prosperity to people on both sides, which is in line with the increase in trade and e-commerce volume between our countries,” said Srettha.

Srettha, in describing the bilateral meeting as “unusual”, emphasised the importance of setting up a task force in formulating a concrete plan with a timeframe.

He said the task force is the way forward since both Thailand and Malaysia have been very close nations for a long time.

Srettha expressed hope that both countries could achieve robust growth in the near future.

On agriculture, he pointed out that as Malaysia is globally recognised for its halal-brand certification, Thailand aims to collaborate with Malaysia to expand its halal sector.

“As Malaysia is recognised for its halal-brand certification, this will help us sell our products to the world. With the certification, we can expand our market to the global world. This is an area which we believe can be improved upon,” he said.

Srettha acknowledged that Malaysian automaker Proton Geely had voiced its anticipation to set up an electric vehicle factory in Thailand.

Regarding people-to-people ties, especially in tourism, he expressed hope that more Thais will visit Malaysia, as the latter has consistently ranked as a top nation that visits Thailand.

Srettha is on his maiden visit to Malaysia after being sworn in as Thailand’s prime minister on Sept 5.

He is on a five-day working visit to Hong Kong and ASEAN member countries. The visit began on Sunday (Oct 8) in Hong Kong followed by Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore, according to Thailand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. – BERNAMA

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