

PM ANWAR ARRIVES IN PHNOM PENH, OFFICIAL VISIT TO STRENGTHEN TIES

DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM

NEWS

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PHNOM PENH, March 27 — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim arrived in Cambodia today for a one-day official visit to further strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation between Malaysia and the Indochinese country, established in 1957.

It is Anwar's maiden visit to the country made at the invitation of Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Anwar's arrival at Phnom Penh International Airport at 9.05 am local time and was greeted by Minister of Human Resources V. Sivakumar and Cambodia's Senior Minister of Special Functions for Islamic Affairs Datuk Dr. Othman Hassan, who is the minister-in-attendance.

Besides Sivakumar, also accompanying Anwar during the visit are Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar.

After arriving, the prime minister was taken to the Peace Palace here, which is the official office of the Prime Minister of Cambodia, for the official welcoming ceremony where the national anthems of both countries were played, followed by a salute accompanied by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Anwar and Hun Sen will then hold a bilateral meeting to discuss various regional and international issues, and after that hold a joint press conference

to announce the results of the discussion before witnessing the signing of two memoranda of understanding (MoU) between the Malaysian and Cambodian governments.

The MoU is regarding the Recruitment, Employment and Repatriation of Cambodian workers in the domestic sector as well as the Recruitment, Employment and Repatriation of Cambodian workers in the formal sector to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the labour sector.

After that, Anwar is scheduled to have an audience with Cambodia's King Norodom Sihamoni at the Royal Palace of Cambodia.

The Prime Minister is then scheduled to hold a meeting with the President of the Cambodian Senate Say Chhum and the President of the Cambodian National Assembly Heng Samrin before meeting about 300 Malaysians in the country at the Malaysian Embassy.

During the packed schedule, the Prime Minister will also attend a special "iftar" (breaking of fast) hosted by Hun Sen together with academicians and the Muslim community in Cambodia. About 6,000 people are expected to attend the event at the Chroy Changvar International Convention and Exhibition Centre here.

At the "iftar" event, Anwar will witness the symbolic handing over of 1,500 copies of the Quran translation in Khmer and English from Malaysia to the Muslim community in Cambodia and perform the Tarawih prayers at Al-Serkal Mosque here before departing for home.

In 2022, Cambodia was Malaysia's 58th biggest trading partner and the eighth biggest in the Asean with a total trade of US\$ 683.6 million, an increase of 20.8 per cent compared with the value recorded in the previous year.

The total exports to Cambodia increased by 15.3 per cent to US\$526.5 million, whereas total imports from Cambodia recorded an increase of 43.5 per cent to US\$157.1 million compared with the previous year.

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