

**PM ANWAR CONVEYS HUMANITARIAN MESSAGE ON GAZA IN VISIT TO
TURKIYE
DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
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ISTANBUL, Oct 23 (Bernama) — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's visit to Istanbul for a meeting with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan may be short but in the words of Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, it was very productive.

The key message conveyed by Anwar at the meeting with the Turkish president was that the humanitarian issue and the fate of Palestinians in Gaza deeply touched the hearts of Malaysians and what Malaysia, Turkiye and the rest of the world could do to help resolve the conflict.

Malaysia is Turkiye's largest trading partner in ASEAN with trade totalling US\$4.7 billion (US\$1=RM4.51) in 2022, a 35 per cent increase from 2021.

Ties between Malaysia and Turkiye are extremely close, as evident from the several rounds of discussions held between Anwar and Erdogan this year.

In his working visit of less than 24 hours to Istanbul, Anwar met Turkish Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek, Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and Turkish National Intelligence Organisation director Ibrahim Kalin, before meeting Erdogan.

At every meeting, especially the discussion with Erdogan which lasted about two hours, among the matters highlighted by Anwar were the atrocities committed by Israel and the humanitarian issue, which is seen to be

increasingly marginalised in Gaza. Anwar also touched on bilateral relations as well as economic and trade cooperation.

After Turkiye, Anwar left for Egypt for another two-day working visit.

Wisma Putra, in a statement, said the two working visits reflected Malaysia's undivided commitment to tackling the Palestine issue, especially in efforts to ease the sufferings of the Palestinian people due to the Gaza Strip crisis.

In a sign of Malaysia's unwavering championing of Palestinian rights, Anwar, in a press conference at the end of his Turkiye visit, expressed his regret over several Western countries which were seen to be closing their eyes to the humanitarian issue in the tumultuous region.

Turkiye, in Anwar's view, had stepped forth to champion the humanitarian issue in Gaza by sending plenty of medical aid to the conflict area despite facing difficulties in reaching remote areas.

Prior to arriving in Turkiye, Anwar, in his speech at the inaugural ASEAN-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit in Riyadh, had also spoken about the ongoing Palestine-Israel conflict.

GCC is a political and economic pact formed by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait.

And as soon as he set foot in Egypt, Anwar said in his speech at a gathering with the Malaysian diaspora and students in the country that 'the attacks on Gaza must stop immediately'.

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