
M'sia can inspire Asean Summit

Madani-spirited plans can be used to provide an objective framework

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JAKARTA: World leaders, including Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, are expected to descend upon Indonesia's capital to attend the 43rd Asean Summit from Sept 5 to 7.

As the chair and host, Indonesia has set the tagline of the summit as "Asean matters: Epicentrum of Growth", which will culminate with a series of meetings in this city well known for its gridlock, where a mere 4km drive could take more than two hours.

This year's summit will be attended not only by its 10-member states and Timor-Leste, but it will also see the participation of nine Asean dialogue partners and members of the East Asia Summit, including the United States, China, India, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and

Russia.

The United States had announced that Vice-President Kamala Harris will take part in the US-Asean Summit and East Asia Summit, while China's Foreign Ministry confirmed on Friday that Prime Minister Li Qiang will attend the summit.

The leaders will navigate through a complex web of issues seeking common ground and shared solutions for things ranging from bilateral trade negotiations and climate agreements to regional security and humanitarian issues.

Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute chief executive officer Daniah Rahman said earlier this year, at the 42nd Asean Summit, Anwar had proposed multiple priorities for Asean including the establishment of an Asian Monetary Fund, the need for Asean to play a role in resolving

the Myanmar crisis and also to continually promote the wellbeing of the Asean people.

"For this upcoming 43rd summit, Malaysia can expect continued dialogue on a number of the above mentioned themes, with progress expected especially on the digital economy, trade and food security," he said.

He added that keeping in mind that the summit will be attended not only by Asean members but also China, India, Russia and the United States, it would be an opportune platform for Malaysia to espouse the vision and mission of the recently launched New Industrial Master Plan (NIMP) 2030 and the National Energy Transition Roadmap.

"Both these Malaysia Madani-spirited plans will provide Asean with an objective framework towards the Asean 2045 Vision," he said.

Daniah added that NIMP 2030, with regard to supporting growth and access to financing for SMEs, which account for 92%-97% of all businesses in Asean, and the competition for talent as well as matters related to digital nomad visas, should be discussed.

One area which Malaysia can take a leading role, he argued, is on sustainability.

"As one of the most at-risk regions for climate change, the volume appears to have lowered after the Asean State of Climate Change Report was published in 2021.

"Hence, in light of the recent United Nations report that the Sustainable Development Goals are either stalling or reversing, it would be interesting to see how the 43rd summit addresses this, especially since this is a big theme at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly later in

September," he said.

Dr Oh Ei Sun, a senior fellow at the Singapore Institute of International Affairs, said the top agenda of the summit will likely be on the economy, as some Asean economies have performed comparatively better than other world economies.

"They could do even better, and the discussion will lean towards how to move forward," he said.

Aside from that, the issue related to Myanmar will be likely discussed, though it is unlikely that tangible short-term solutions will be available, said Oh.

"But as usual, there can be no consensus for stronger posture, as a few Asean members would likely not permit such posture," he said.

Temu Anwar, a youth dialogue programme with Anwar, will also be held for the first time abroad on Tuesday in Jakarta.