

VERBATIM TEXT

REMARKS BY

THE HONOURABLE DATO' SERI ANWAR IBRAHIM

PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

AT A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH

HIS EXCELLENCY MIN AUNG HLAING

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF

MYANMAR

PUTRAJAYA

8 OCTOBER 2026

Respected Excellency, President Min Aung Hlaing from Myanmar and members of delegations, Ministers. May I take this opportunity to thank you, President Min Aung Hlaing for accepting my invitation to visit Malaysia. Having the opportunity to have candid constructive discussions on a wide

ranging of issues. First, four eyes and bilaterally with ministers and key government personnel.

Now, we have had excellent relations for a long time, but of course, recent developments have somewhat blocked that sort of progress. So I think our interest is of course to enhance this collaboration. We of course, are reminded of the ASEAN mechanism, but we also understand that the President and your government have made a lot of efforts not only to enhance bilateral relations, but to have the necessary reform, policy changes and adjustments in your own country.

Of course, as we know, in any country, particularly as complex, multi-ethnic and a wide range of differences, it is a process that we need to understand and respect. And we have already conveyed, I think in my four eyed discussions, I'll be very open and frank and I appreciate your openness and frankness too, because we will have to have that sort of understanding to be able to further fortify our relations.

But we have also agreed that notwithstanding issues that we have to deal with, that the focus must be our people. Our people means, trade, investments, collaboration, all fields, education, agrifood, energy, healthcare, and capacity building.

And as you realize, the increase year to year till now has surpassed 140%, which is quite to me impressive, in terms of our economic ties and potential.

Now Mr. President, you have been kind enough to respond. Foreign Minister Mohamad Hasan was there in Myanmar, and with his counterpart, the Foreign Minister had discussions with you. And he of course, reported back to me and the cabinet that the meeting has been very useful and reaching both parties. And he conveyed views and I must also express my appreciation that his counterpart and yourself Mr. President, having very cooperative, understanding our position and we understanding your position.

One of the issues that's causing this problem or misunderstanding is the issue of domestic issues that covers democratic reform, etc. And we have heard your concerns, but I have already explained not only here, but also to my counterpart in ASEAN. When I met you in Bangkok after the earthquake, you made certain policy statements which is quite to me remarkable. For example, our field hospital should allow any person without discrimination, that you will continue your policy to engage with all parties to avoid further escalation of violence. Of course, I welcome that and convey my colleagues, not only here, but also in ASEAN. But how you do it, the mechanism of course is up to you as a leader of the country. But I want to just express the importance that we have never renege from that responsibility to express our views.

Now the second issue of concerns is the repatriation of Myanmar nationals. And many of us do not realize that very, very few, hardly any country in my experience, are willing to accept this arbitration in large number at their own expense, as you have shown in Myanmar.

So as a government, we of course have to express our appreciation. Until now over 10,493 Myanmar citizens and personnel taken back through flights and naval ship and thanks to our navy for the collaboration. And you have stated that the others who are present subject to the records will be negotiated further by the Ministry of Home Affairs and their counterpart. And you're willing to accept them according to the stipulated rules and procedure.

So, I must thank you. You mentioned immediately those in the depot, 3000 - 4000 will be repatriated and anyone who can be ascertained as coming from Myanmar. And of course, you have to sit in whether current criminal records, whatever, those procedures we will have to respect. But I must again reiterate my thanks for your candid manner and willingness to collaborate.

So, in conclusion, may I say this, that this visit, Mr. President, is very important to us and for our two countries and for the region. Thank you for being kind enough to accept this invitation. I wasn't sure initially because it's been long break, but my first meeting with you in Bangkok, I knew that it will

work because you have been very, not only candid, but you've been very willing to accommodate, listen to views and make the necessary adjustments.

And with this visit, Mr President, I would say that we and our part in Malaysia, we'll do whatever is possible to make sure that we enhance this collaboration and ultimately take Myanmar as part of our community of nations without prejudice and particularly in the context of ASEAN.

But for now, bilaterally between Malaysia and Myanmar, it should be the high par. So, thank you again for this visit.