

**Anwar: Vietnam a close friend of Malaysia, its resilience is admirable**

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HANOI: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim considers Vietnam a very close friend of Malaysia since diplomatic relations were established between both countries five decades ago.

He said both countries have established excellent bilateral relations and Malaysia is ready to expand the present collaboration and special relationship to greater heights.

Anwar also expressed his admiration for Vietnam and its people's struggle to recover from the hardships experienced during the fight against colonialists. "Because of the resilient leadership and the people, you have been enormously successful in just a few decades, establishing Vietnam as an important country in ASEAN and now known as one of the most promising developing countries in the world," he said.

Anwar said this in his speech at an official dinner hosted by Prime Minister of Vietnam Pham Minh Chinh here tonight (July 20).

Besides Chinh, other dignitaries at the dinner were Foreign Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abd Kadir, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz and Foreign Affairs Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Amran Mohamed Zin. Earlier, when paying a courtesy call on the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) Nguyen Phu Trong, Anwar said he was happy with the cooperation between both countries in efforts to strengthen bilateral relations.

"I was also informed that His Excellency Nguyen Phu Trong often spoke about anti-corruption and good governance in Vietnam, and we were both able to exchange views on this matter and the need for the anti-corruption agencies of both countries to work together and have a joint partnership," he said. – BERNAMA