

# Timor-Leste awards land to Malaysia to strengthen bilateral ties — Ahmad Zahid

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia has been awarded 0.6 hectares of land by the government of Timor-Leste as a symbolic gesture to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said in a statement here yesterday that the land awarded can be utilised for the construction of the Malaysian Embassy and various other purposes

for Malaysians residing in the country.

Ahmad Zahid, who ended a three-day official visit to Timor-Leste today, said during the visit, he met with President José Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão and several other leaders.

He said the meetings provided an opportunity for Malaysia and Timor-Leste to expand potential cooperation and explore new areas that could benefit both

countries.

"Several meetings and discussions were held focusing on efforts to strengthen bilateral relations, including focusing on specific sectors such as rural development, housing, the halal industry, the empowerment of the growing tourism sector, and Timor-Leste's efforts to become a new member of ASEAN," he said.

Ahmad Zahid also said that efforts to enhance bilateral trade

were discussed, and he suggested that TradeInvest Timor-Leste conduct a trade and investment mission to Malaysia to explore various potential investment opportunities that could benefit both countries.

The Minister of Rural and Regional Development said that Malaysia, through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), is also committed to sharing experience and expertise with Timor-

Leste under the framework of South-South Cooperation, and so far, 781 participants from the country have been trained in various courses and technical assistance programmes offered.

"Additionally, the Institute for Rural Advancement (INFRA) will invite leaders and government officials from Timor-Leste who are directly involved in rural development to visit Malaysia, offering them the opportunity

to conduct case studies and gain insights from Malaysia's experience in rural development," he said.

Ahmad Zahid said the success of the official visit to Timor-Leste is also reflected in the signing of a Letter of Intent between UniKL and the Ministry of Higher Education of Timor-Leste for the establishment of a Technical and Vocational Education and Training centre in that country. — Bernama