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Mahathir-China

SINO-MALAYSIA TIES INCREASED BY LEAPS, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, May 30<sup>94</sup> (Bernama) -- The bilateral relations between Malaysia and China have reached a new level of understanding and cooperation, and the two countries should take pride in the steady development, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He said in the last five years, bilateral relations have increased by leaps and bounds in many fields of cooperation.

"I am confident this trend will be further reinforced in the years to come," he said in a two-page letter to Chinese Premier Li Peng on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

His letter was released by Wisma Putra.

Formal ties were sealed in Beijing on May 31, 1974, by the late Tun Abdul Razak, then Malaysian Prime Minister, and his then Chinese counterpart, the late Chou En-Lai. -- more

Mahathir-China 2 (last) Kuala Lumpur (EMBARGO)

Dr Mahathir paid tribute to Razak's vision and courage in making Malaysia the first Asean country to normalise ties with China.

"I believe credit for the development of the excellent relations between Malaysia and China should also go to the pragmatic and outward-looking leadership of China," he said.

He said the policy of friendly relations with neighbouring countries has encouraged positive developments in bilateral relationships, particularly in recent years.

Both Malaysia and China could take pride in the steady development of mutually satisfying relations over the last two decades, although links between them actually go back a long way in history, he added.

Apart from the rapid increase in economic cooperation, trade and investment, Dr Mahathir said cooperation in other fields such as tourism, cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts would further encourage better understanding and friendship.

Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi also sent a message on the occasion to his Chinese counterpart and Vice-Premier Qian Qichen. --

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