

KL all for 'One China' policy, says Pak Lah

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PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia has assured China that it subscribes to the "One China" policy with regards to Taiwan,

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said China's visiting Vice-President Hu Jintao had raised the matter during their discussions.

"Hu stressed the importance of the "One China" policy to China and I told him that it is also the policy of the (Malaysian) Government," he said after meeting Hu for about two hours at his office here yesterday.

He said Malaysia's tie with Taiwan was strictly economic and non-political.

Abdullah said Malaysia and China also agreed to institutionalise Asean+3 to become the East Asia Summit.

"China agrees with Malaysia that the success of Asean+3 should be turned into something more meaningful because at the moment, it appears like ad hoc," he said.

He hoped China would play a bigger role in the region.

"That is why in 1991 we suggested that China become part of the East Asia Economic Group, then the Asean Regional Forum and later, Apec (Asia Pacific Economic Conference)," he said.

Abdullah said Malaysia and China also agreed to the implementation of a code of conduct among countries claiming the strategic and oil-rich Spratly Islands.

He said the code would ensure the countries do not take any action over the

islands, which could raise tension among claimant nations.

"Each country must exercise restraint to ensure that South China Sea is not regarded as unstable and a potential area of conflict," he said.

Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, said the Government had agreed to allow Chinese tourists to obtain their visas at the point-of-entry to encourage them to visit the country.

Abdullah said he had also asked Hu to consider importing more palm oil from

Malaysia.

"Hu replied that three-quarters of China's palm oil consumption is from Malaysia. Nevertheless, he said China is ready to import more if the quality is high and the price competitive," he said.

Earlier, Hu called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at his office. They held discussions for about 30 minutes.

Later, Dr Mahathir hosted a private dinner for Hu at Seri Perdana.