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Abdullah-Relations

CHINA-MALAYSIA RELATIONS AT ITS PEAK - CHINESE PREMIER

By: Khairdzir Yunus

BEIJING, Sept 15 (Bernama) -- China's Prime Minister Wen Jiabao considers the bilateral relation between Malaysia and China now at its zenith in the history of the two countries' relationship.

This was told to Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi at their meeting here today.

Abdullah, who is on a five-day working visit to China starting yesterday, told a press conference after the meeting that the Chinese Premier also expressed hope that he (Abdullah) could continue to enhance the existing close ties when he took over the leadership of the country.

Aside from paying a courtesy call on Wen Jiabao, Abdullah also held a meeting with Chinese Vice Premier Huang Ju today.

Abdullah said he had pledged to try to strengthen the existing bilateral ties in the meetings with China's top two officials.

"The two Chinese leaders see us as a good friend and the bilateral ties which exist between the two countries are very strong," he said.

Abdullah will take over Malaysia's reins when Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad retires as Prime Minister after the Organisation of Islamic Conference Summit hosted by Malaysia next month.

Abdullah said the Chinese Premier told him there were opportunities to strengthen ties between the two countries and he hoped bilateral trade between Malaysia and China could be increased to US\$20 billion (RM76 billion) next year.

Last year's bilateral trade between Malaysia and China was US\$14 billion (RM52.2 billion) while the total for the first half of this year was US\$8.7 billion (RM33.6 billion).

On the more than 200 Malaysian businessmen accompanying him on his trip to China, Abdullah said the two Chinese leaders welcomed their arrival and hoped it would create opportunities for cooperation with their counterparts in China.

He said the Chinese Vice Premier also identified areas which needed the attention of the private sector of both countries like high technology, biotechnology, information and communication technology and outer space.

"We are also paying attention to agriculture which relates to aquaculture and rice," Abdullah said.

He said China also expressed interest in making additional investments in Malaysia especially in the BioValley project involving pharmaceutical and herbal industries.

On international issues, he said China stressed its stand on multilateralism and would play its role in the United Nations to support multilateralism as a crucial effort in resolving world woes.

The Deputy Prime Minister said China also expressed her opposition to terrorism and was ready to cooperate with Malaysia to combat the terrorists.

Abdullah said he also supported China's policy to establish strategic partners among Asean countries, which was told to him by the Chinese Premier.

Abdullah said he also communicated to the leaders the need for better cooperation in education.

Meanwhile, he said the Chinese leaders also related their support towards the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) which they expected to sign at the Asean Summit in Bali on Oct 7 and 8.

"This is a good development," Abdullah said.  
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