

British PM in KL with improved trade in mind

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By dpa

British Prime Minister David Cameron and Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak on Thursday vowed to double bilateral trade in four years.

NONE"(The potential) is simply enormous and both our economic ministers have agreed that we should try to double our bilateral trade by the year 2016," Najib said in a joint conference with Cameron after their meeting.

"We both agree that there is an opportunity for us to enhance and increase our bilateral trade," he said. "It's an ambitious goal but we will try to work towards that."

Bilateral trade between the two countries stood at RM13.69 billion in 2011.

Cameron arrived in Malaysia this afternoon for an overnight visit in a bid to boost ties with the Southeast Asian country. He was the first British leader to visit the former British colony in nearly two decades.

Aside from trade, the two leaders discussed issues of mutual concerns related to politics, diplomacy, education and training, science, technology and environment as well as defence and security.

Cameron also met with Malaysian business leaders and witness the signing of an agreement on educational cooperation between the two countries.

'We reject violent extremism'

Cameron admitted that relations between Malaysia and Britain have been "neglected".

NONE"Our relationship with Malaysia is hugely important to the UK, but, quite frankly, it's one that has been neglected in the past," he said in an interview with The Star, Malaysia's leading English-language newspaper.

"Today, I will be the first British prime minister to visit Malaysia since 1993, and I want my visit to build on the relationship Prime Minister Najib and I reinvigorated," he was quoted as saying.

Cameron added that he and Najib "share the same ambition to reject violent extremism and to create prosperity for our people."

"We both want to ensure that Iran does not get a nuclear weapon that would threaten the security of the region and the world," he said.

Cameron's 83-member delegation included Minister of State for Trade and Investment Stephen Green and Minister of State for Universities and Science David Willets.

- dpa

