

PM: M'sia confident of closer Asean-China ties
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Malaysia is confident that the strong ties existing between Asean and China will enter its 25th year in 2016, will mark a more robust trade and investment activity, moving forward.

In his opening remarks at the 18th Asean-China Summit here today, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said Malaysia in principle, would support the various activities proposed by both sides to mark the landmark anniversary.

He added that China had been one of the region's most important dialogue partners and the relationship was further strengthened with the adoption of an action plan to implement a joint declaration on Asean-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity.

"Malaysia is further encouraged by China's continued commitment, affirmation and strong support for Asean centrality and our leading role in Asean mechanism including the Asia Pacific and East Asia Summit," he added.

The Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity was signed at the Seventh Asean-China Summit on Oct 8, 2003 in Bali, Indonesia.

The plan of action was formulated to serve as the "master plan" to deepen and broaden Asean-China relation and cooperation in a comprehensive and mutually beneficial manner between 2005 and 2010.

It serves to strengthen the strategic partnership for regional peace, development and prosperity and play a proactive role in tapping opportunities and meeting the challenges of the new millennium.

The 18th Asean-China Summit was held alongside the 27th Asean Summit, which ends tomorrow.

Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang, who arrived in the Malaysian capital yesterday, also attended the Asean-China Summit. The closed-door meeting was held for 100 minutes.

As the chairperson of this year's Asean Summit, Najib also recorded his appreciation to Thailand, which has been the coordinating country for the Asean-China dialogue for the past three years, while welcoming Singapore as the new coordinator.

- *Bernama*

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