

Govt intends to enhance diplomatic engagement with China

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The government intends to enhance its diplomatic engagement with China to ensure that the two countries become a strong strategic partnership in the future.

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim called China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit to Malaysia a significant one, saying that it reflects the strong bond between the two nations.

"Our position is to ensure the relationship with China remains strong, and is further enhanced from the normal diplomatic engagement to become a strong strategic partnership," he told reporters, after the courtesy call by Wang and Chinese delegates, in George Town, Penang today.

Anwar also thanked Wang for facilitating many major Chinese investments in Malaysia.

Earlier Wang had a four-eye meeting with Anwar for about 25 minutes at a hotel

in George Town before they were joined by Transport Minister Anthony Loke; Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Tiong King Sing; Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Chang Lih Kang and caretaker Penang chief minister Chow Kon Yeow, for further discussion.

Anwar, who is also the finance minister, said the visit will also further strengthen the strategic ties between the two countries.

He said that during the discussion, both nations plan to explore increasing collaboration in research and education.

“We mainly discussed trade and investment but we also touched on education, where we (Malaysia) have a significant number of Chinese students, about 60,000 here, and they also intend to increase the Malaysian students in China,” he added.

China largest trading partner

The meeting signifies the importance of bilateral trade relations between the two countries, where China has remained Malaysia's largest trading partner since 2009, with a trade volume of US\$110.6 billion (RM488 billion) recorded last year.

In terms of investment, China was the largest foreign direct investor in Malaysia

last year, with investments amounting to RM55.16 billion.

Malaysia's total exports to China increased by 9.4 percent, to RM210.62 billion in 2022, while imports from China saw a 20.7 per cent increase, to RM276.50 billion in the same year.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between Malaysia and China, and both countries will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties next year, signifying the long-standing friendship and robust cooperation in various sectors.

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