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FTA signing highlight of Najib's Ankara trip

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ANKARA: The signing of a free trade agreement between Kuala Lumpur and Ankara will be the highlight of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's two-day visit to Turkey.

The inking of the agreement, announced during Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to Kuala Lumpur in January to mark the two nations' 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties, is scheduled for tomorrow.

It holds significant promise for the nations, which had, in January, agreed to look into increasing bilateral trade from US\$1.5 billion (RM4.8 billion) to US\$5 billion.

Islamic finance, tourism, cultural exchange and cooperation among developing nations are among the key issues the leaders are expected to discuss during Najib's visit.

Observers believe that the visit by Najib, who is expected to arrive here later today with his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, will boost Malaysia's presence in Europe, with Turkey being viewed as a diplomatic and economic gateway to the continent, promising further benefits for an emerging economy like Malaysia.

It is a win-win situation when one considers the attractive promise of access to Southeast Asia that Malaysia holds for Turkey.

Today, Najib will hold meetings with key people involved in the visit. He will also attend a dinner hosted by the Malaysian embassy here.

By Yushaimi Yahaya

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