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Strategic partnership with Japan

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> Both countries agree to lift bilateral relationship to higher level

TOKYO: Malaysia and its long-standing friend and third largest trading partner, Japan, yesterday agreed to elevate their bilateral relations to the level of "strategic partnership".

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said the ties between both countries had progressed well over the years, and cooperation in various fields like economy, tourism and people-to-people, had grown steadily.

"We have decided to raise the relationship to a strategic partnership that we believe can lift the bilateral ties to a greater height," Najib said at a joint-press conference with his counterpart Shinzo Abe after their bilateral meeting at the Prime Minister's Office here.

The prime minister, who is here on a three-day official visit beginning on Sunday, was earlier accorded an official welcoming ceremony, in which he inspected

Najib shaken by earthquake

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak yesterday tweeted that he was "shaken" a little by an earthquake that hit Tokyo before his meeting with Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe about 2pm.

"Sblm mesy bersama kapten industri td Tokyo dilanda gempa bumi. Rasa gegaran, lantai, lampu bergerak. Apa pun semua tenang,

Alhamdulillah," he tweeted.

(Before my meeting with captains of the industry, Tokyo was hit by an earthquake. I felt the tremors, the floor, the lamps shook. However, everyone was calm, Alhamdulillah.)

A 5.6 magnitude quake shook Tokyo and the surrounding areas, while there were no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

the ceremonial guard-of-honour from the Self-Defence Forces.

The Malaysian delegation also included Malaysian Ambassador to Japan Datuk Ahmad Izlan Idris, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Idris Jala and Chief Secretary to the Government, Tan Sri Ali Hamsa.

With the new partnership guiding the two countries' journey into the future, Najib said both leaders shared the determination to enhance cooperation, specifically in five areas - cooperation for peace and stability; achieving free, open

and stable sea; investment through Look East Policy 2.0 and economy; expanded cooperation in cultural and people-to-people exchange; and contribution to regional and global agenda.

Meanwhile, Abe said both leaders shared the view that the implementation of cooperation in the areas including advanced industrial technologies, services and managerial skills, should be expedited.

In a joint statement issued after the meeting, both Japan and Malaysia reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability,