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Najib to knit closer ties at AAC meet

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COOPERATION:

Discussions will be held to resolve common issues

BANDUNG



NIK IMRAN
ABDULLAH

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is set to strengthen Malaysia's image in the eyes of other countries with his attendance at the 60th anniversary of Asian-African Conference (AAC) here.

The event, which brings together nearly 90 countries from the two continents and those from the Middle East, is an important milestone in their cooperation to resolve common issues such as maintaining peace, and eradicating poverty and terrorism.

One of the defining moments will be the "historical walk", where Najib and his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, will join Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo and his wife, Iriana, as well as other heads of state and government to take a stroll from Savoy Homann Hotel to

Gedung Merdeka here tomorrow.

The walk was first performed in 1955 by then AAC organisers, including its host, Indonesia's first president Sukarno. Their meeting produced the First historic document called the Bandung Declaration. It was a crucial step then for the newly independent countries towards promoting economic and cultural cooperation.

Malaysian ambassador to Indonesia Datuk Seri Zahrain Mohamed Hashim said the participation of Najib outlined Malaysia's commitment to the AAC.

"It is from the AAC that other cooperations involving the South-South nations, including Malaysia, have emerged in recent times."

The events commemorating the ACC will run from April-19 to 24, starting in Jakarta before culminating here.

Zahrain said Malaysia would reiterate the need to exercise moderation to maintain peace among the countries during the summit meetings of the AAC.

"Discussions will also involve other issues of cooperation such as managing natural catastrophes through the setting up of early warning systems."

He said Najib was also here for the 10th anniversary celebration of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership. He is expected to meet Malaysian students at a dinner here as part of his two-day visit, starting today.