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Better ties with Vietnam

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Najib meets new PM for first time to discuss cooperation

SOCHI (RUSSIA): Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak held bilateral talks with his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Xuan Phuc on the sidelines of the Asean-Russia Commemorative Summit here.

This was the first time Najib met the new prime minister of Vietnam, who was sworn into office in April this year.

Their discussion yesterday centred on the current state of bilateral cooperation and the means to further enhance relations.

Both leaders are here to attend the two-day summit to commemorate the 20 years of Asean-Russia dialogue relations.

The commemorative summit serves as a platform for the leaders of the Asean member states and Russia to chart the future direction of the partnership.

Meanwhile, Malaysia and Russia will explore expanding business ties to provide better connectivity, including establishing direct flights and exploring a free trade agreement (FTA) deal to enhance bilateral trade and tourist arrivals.

These were matters discussed in a bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Russian President Vladimir Putin before the summit.

The two leaders also agreed during the 30-minute meeting for Malaysia and Russia to discuss further action to ensure justice was achieved in the downing of the ill-fated Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 in Ukraine in 2014, after the



Rapt attention: Putin delivering his opening remarks during the Asean-Russia Commemorative Summit. Seated are Najib and other Asean leaders. — Bernama

presentation of the Joint Investigation Team report.

Speaking to Malaysian reporters after the meeting, Najib said he and Putin noted that Malaysia-Russia trade relations were at a satisfactory level but had yet to reach a “commendable” level.

Later Putin personally welcomed

the leaders of Asean for the welcoming ceremony and working session.

The Asean-Russia summit leaders immediately got into their working session as they engaged in a meeting with the representatives of the Business Forum.

In line with the tradition of inter-

national forums, the summit participants posed for a family photo before proceeding to the plenary session of the summit. — Bernama