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Extremely successful, says Najib

WEEK-LONG VISIT:
PM invites Xi
to revisit
Malaysia, praises
One Belt, One
Road initiative

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse here yesterday exemplified the close ties between both leaders and the progress achieved in bilateral trade and investment.

What should have been a 30-minute meeting was extended to more than an hour.

"A lot of matters were discussed," Najib told Malaysian media at a press conference here last night.

In his opening remarks, Najib thanked Xi for the gracious hospitality and high-level reception given to him and members of the Malaysian delegation.

"I believe, Mr President, that I might be the first foreign leader to meet with you after the recent party Congress. Therefore, I would like to offer my sincere and deepest appreciation to you for a successful Congress and your elevation as 'core leader' of the Communist Party of China."

Last month, China's ruling Communist Party gave Xi the title of "core leader", putting him on a par with Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.

"It's very important that your strong, visionary and effective leadership has the strong support of the Communist Party because we believe that your leadership will propel China forward, and the Chinese dream that you cherish will be fulfilled under your leadership," Najib said.

In his welcoming remarks earlier, Xi said he was happy to see that

bilateral ties, elevated in 2013 to "comprehensive strategic partnership" states, had realised many positive achievements.

Xi recalled Tun Abdul Razak's "historical" contribution to the Malaysia-China bilateral relationship which Najib, as prime minister, had continued to enhance.

He said Malaysia-China ties should continue to be strengthened across various sectors.

"Malaysia and China are good neighbours, rely on each other, mutually respect each other, and are good friends and partners," he said.

Najib described his ongoing visit to China as "extremely successful", given the progress achieved in advancing cooperation in trade and investment between both countries.

"Your vision of a comprehensive strategic partnership — the One Belt, One Road and Maritime Silk Road initiatives — has not only been accepted but implemented."

This included the landmark purchase of four littoral mission ships (LMS) from China for the Royal Malaysian Navy, which was signed recently.

This was the first time that Malaysia had purchased military equipment from China.

Another major achievement was the setting up of Xiamen University's campus in Malaysia.

It was the first state-owned Chinese university to open a branch campus overseas, and Malaysia was chosen as the host country.

The medium of instruction would be English, with the exception of traditional Chinese medicine, Najib said.

The prime minister said he had invited Xi to visit Malaysia again, where they would jointly officiate in the opening of the Xiamen University Malaysian campus. Xi's last visit to Malaysia was in 2013.

Najib, meanwhile, had accepted Xi's invitation to attend the One Belt, One Road (OBOR) Conference in China next year.

"All the countries affected by the One Belt, One Road initiative have been invited to attend.

"As we are one of the first countries to embrace the concept, I stated my agreement to attend the conference in May next year," Najib said.

He said one of the examples of Malaysia embracing the OBOR concept was the East Coast Rail Line (ECRL) which, once completed, would be part of a rail network extending from Singapore in the south, to China in the North.

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