

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	5 NOVEMBER 2016

Najib hails extraordinary success in China visit

NST-5/11/2016

IMPACTFUL: PM inks RM143b trade deals, 16 govt-to-govt agreements



BEIJING

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's groundbreaking third official visit to China has been an extraordinary success.

At the midway point of his six-day visit, tangible results that already stood out include the RM143 billion worth of business-to-business deals sealed, 16 government-to-government agreements, and commitment from many corporate leaders to expand their investments in Malaysia.

On an auspicious Friday yesterday, after attending prayers at the 700-year-old Dongzhimen Mosque, more landmark achievements were achieved that would cement Malaysia-China ties into the future

where knowledge and technology are the new currency.

"This visit has opened up new fields, and among them are e-commerce and the digital economy.

"China has experienced this, and I have met with three major players — Alibaba, Tencent and Wanda.

"They want to participate in the development of digital economy in Malaysia," Najib said at a press conference with the Malaysian media.

The prime minister met with Alibaba founder and executive chairman Jack Ma for 30 minutes at China World Hotel, and later both of them arrived at a packed ballroom for the launch of the Alitrip Malaysia Tourism Pavilion, a collaboration to boost tourist attractions in Malaysia via the travel portal.

Abandoning his prepared text, Najib surprised the audience by announcing at the outset that Ma had accepted an invitation to become an adviser to the Malaysian government on digital economy.

"In the first quarter of 2017, we will launch the first e-Free Trade Zone in the world.

"And, in developing this concept and its features, including incentives and regulations, we will work closely with Jack Ma because he is knowledgeable in this matter, a global icon in digital economy and information technology," Najib said at the press conference later.

He said Malaysia was also interested in Alibaba Group's AliPayment, which in China has allowed for loans to be processed and disbursed quickly online.

"Based on the track record of our payments and spending patterns, and using Big Data, loan applications

can be processed within only three minutes.

"Payments can be made within one minute, and there's absolutely no interface with humans.

"This is one of the things Ma said we might be able to implement in Malaysia. Ma also hopes to connect small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia through his online portal to access consumers in China. Imagine our SMEs can access the China market, which has huge purchasing power."

This visit is for Malaysia and Malaysians. I have no other objective than to strengthen our friendship with China and the Chinese government...

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak

Najib also said he saw large potential in tourism, where AliPayment would enable tourists to spend more on their travels in the country.

"If we can implement AliPayment, when we bring tourists to Malaysia, we want to facilitate them to shop. They don't have to bring cash or credit cards, just their mobile phones.

"Alitrip is another avenue that would increase tourist arrivals to Malaysia," Najib added.

"There are 120 million Chinese tourists now, and I believe this figure will increase because there are 300 million Chinese classified as middle class."

Najib said he had appointed Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting, his special envoy to China, to supervise all the projects finalised during his visit to ensure that tangible results continue to be achieved.

"When I say that this official visit has achieved extraordinary success, these successes can be listed one by one, and when all these business-to-business projects are implemented, it will benefit Malaysia.

"This visit is for Malaysia and Malaysians. I have no other objective than to strengthen our friendship with China and the Chinese government, which will benefit both countries. I am sure Malaysians and Malaysia will see positive impact from this visit."