PERDANA LIBRARY
PERDANA LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION
NEWSPAPER CLIPPING

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	14 NOVEMBER 2016

'RM143.64b China deals no threat to sovereignty'

NST- 14/11/2016

BENEFICIAL: They are a continuation of Dr M's 'Look East' policy, says PM

HANA NAZ HARUN AND LAILI ISMAIL
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak *at MCA's 63rd annual general assembly in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. With him are (from left)* ***MCA secretary-general Datuk Seri Ong Ka Chuan, president Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai and deputy president Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong.*** Pic by Sairien Nafis

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak yesterday responded to criticism of the Federal Government's RM143.64 billion worth of deals with China, denying that the mega deals had compromised Malaysia's sovereignty.

Taking a leaf out of the book of former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Najib said the deals were merely a continuation of the latter's Look East policy, established in 1981.

MCA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

"What's the difference between investments from China and investments from Japan, (South) Korea or the United States?

"If Dr Mahathir said 'Look East', I am looking east as well. All I did was add another country — China," he said at MCA's 63rd annual general assembly here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir had, last week, criticised the government's deals with China, which include, among others, the RM55 billion East Coast Railway Link (ECRL) and the sale of Bandar Malaysia land to a joint venture with a Chinese company.

During his 22-year tenure as prime minister, Dr Mahathir switched the direction of Malaysian trade to focus on Japan and South Korea.

Najib said China, being one of the biggest economies in the world, should be allowed to invest in Malaysia.

"If there are people who want to invest in China, let them invest. We are an open economy. And with the ECRL, who will benefit? We will benefit... Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang will benefit."

Najib said the plan for an ECRL was already in the pipeline when he was Pahang menteri besar and Dr Mahathir was prime minister.

"However, Dr Mahathir wanted to deal with Japan and it (construction of the ECRL) was not viable then."

He added that the public should not listen to the opposition, as they only subscribed to politics of hate.

The opposition, he said, would confuse the people if it was not able to convince them.

Najib also took a swipe at Dr Mahathir's adviser, lawyer Matthias Chang, who had suggested building canals to increase trade in the country.

"Who uses that anymore? This is the modern world," he said.

The Barisan Nasional chairman also said that Malaysia's deals with China should not be used in political games, and should not be opposed simply because the BN-led government had suggested them.

He said it was important for BN to ensure that its narrative reached the public.

"We need to show people the real picture," Najib said. **Additional reporting by June Moh**

→ *See also* ***B2***