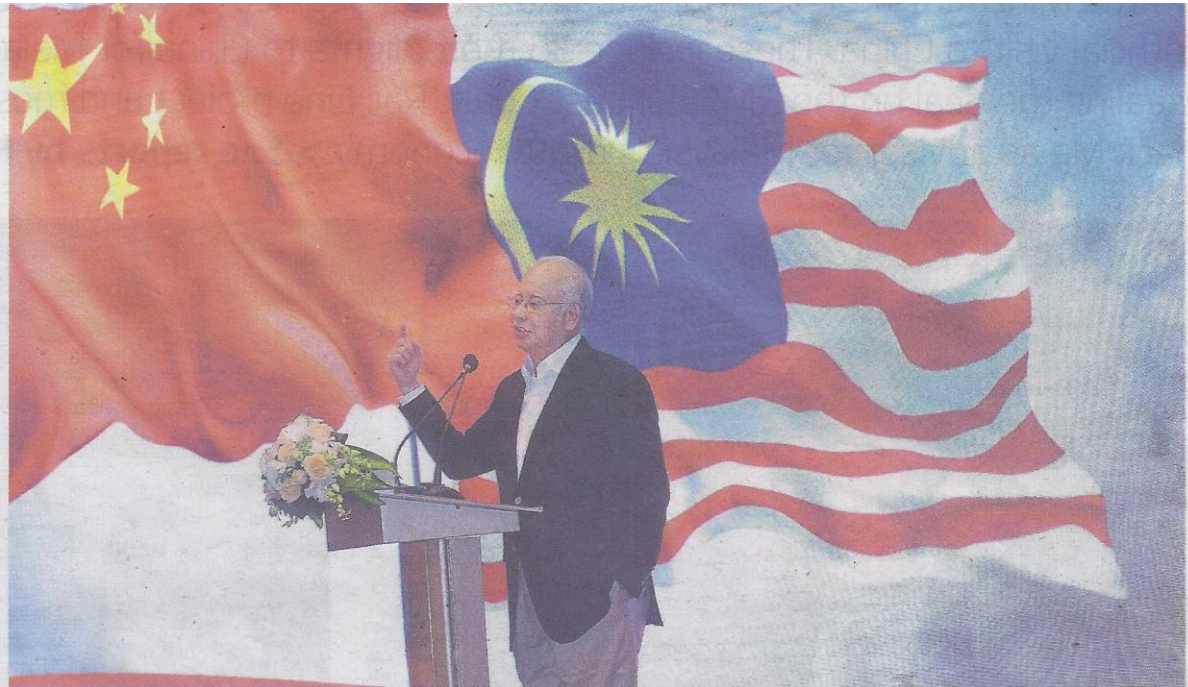




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Newspaper	THE STAR
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Promising relationship: Najib delivering his speech in Beijing. 'A digital economy with e-commerce is Malaysia's next growth strategy,' says the PM. — Bernama

The Star - 5/11/2016

Adviser Jack Ma to start with e-FTZ

BEIJING: Alibaba founder and executive chairman Jack Ma will kick-start his role as adviser to the Malaysian Government on its digital economy at the launch of an e-free trade zone (e-FTZ) in March.

Ma, a global business icon, has ideas on the set up of the e-trade zone, Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said yesterday.

"I had a (30-min) meeting with Mr Jack Ma. He has agreed to be adviser to our Government on the digital economy," said the Prime Minister.

"Jack Ma did not ask for payment. I don't think we can afford to pay him," Najib said in jest later to a reporter's question.

In his Budget 2017 speech last month, Najib announced that a digital economy that includes e-commerce would be Malaysia's next growth strategy as this could bring about double-digit growth.

Alibaba is the largest and most well-known e-commerce giant in China and the world.

"We will be in partnership with Ma on the path and route to the future," said Najib before launching the Alitrip Tourism Malaysia Pavilion in collaboration with Alibaba Group.

Najib said Malaysia would have to act fast to implement Alipay, further develop online banking and online commerce as "we don't want to miss the boat".

On the pavilion, Najib said: "You can see that China is the place to be. It has 300 million middle-class people, larger than the US population.

"We hope, together with Alibaba, we can make Malaysia and China more prosperous," he said.

Ma, before launching the pavilion jointly with Najib with the premier's mobile phone, urged Chinese tourists to visit Malaysia and enjoy the culture there.

"We have a long history between these two countries. About 2,000 years ago, Chinese went to Malaya to make a living. Now, we should go there to enjoy life – not to survive,"

said Ma.

He took the opportunity to pay tribute to the Prime Minister's father for having the foresight to be the first leader in Asean to establish diplomatic ties with China when others shunned the republic for being a communist nation.

"Today, we are benefiting from this decision made 42 years ago. Malaysia is China's largest trading partner in Asean and China is Malaysia's biggest trading partner."

On Malaysians, he noted that on average each Malaysian has 230 friends on his social network.

"This means Malaysians are friendly, trusting and inclusive. This is an excellent culture.

"I love Malaysia... you have the culture, environment, food and hospitality and inclusiveness."

Watch the video
thestartv.com

