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Newspaper	THE SUN
Date	1 NOVEMBER 2016

# 'Najib's visit much anticipated'

## PRESS DIGEST

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**HUA** Zong (Federation of Chinese Associations of Malaysia) president Tan Sri Pheng Yin Huah said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak's latest visit to China has tremendous strategic significance for Sino-Malaysian ties.

This is particularly so at a time when the relationship between Malaysia and the United States is not at its best, Pheng said in a statement released to the Chinese press a day before Najib began his official visit to China yesterday.

He said Najib's visit, his third as the prime minister, is much anticipated by the people of both countries as it

*The Sun - 1/11/2016*  
presents another historic opportunity for yet closer cooperation.

"I hope that apart from enhancing bilateral trade relations and overcoming (some maritime disputes) in the South China Sea, the leaders of the two countries can also make breakthroughs in certain areas such as the pending recognition of more Chinese university degrees by Malaysia, awarding the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail project to Chinese bidders and speeding up cooperation on real estate and port projects."

Pheng pointed out that the relationship between the two countries has not stopped strengthening since diplomatic ties were established 42 years ago, with reciprocal visits by their respective leaders.

The ties were further cemented three years ago with their upgrading to that of a comprehensive strategic partnership during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Malaysia.

In an exclusive interview with *Xinhua* ahead of his visit, Najib said he regards China "as a true friend and a strategic partner" and that the relationship has "created benefits not just for the people of our two nations but also for regional stability and harmony".

"It is a relationship I am personally committed to; not just as the prime minister of Malaysia, but also as the son of Tun Razak - our former prime minister who first established diplomatic relations with China 42 years ago," he said in written responses to *Xinhua*.