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# Malaysia keen to learn from China

Najib to push for cooperation in digital economy during upcoming trip

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia is keen to expand ties with its biggest trading partner China to include cooperation in digital economy, as it enters the “Year of Internet Economy” next year.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said Malaysia has much to learn from China’s advancement in Internet technology.

“I encourage collaborations and cooperation in this sector for both our mutual benefits.

“The potential is limitless, and all that is required is to explore the opportunities,” he said.

Najib was delivering a keynote speech at the Malaysia-China Digital Economy Forum here ahead of his visit to China at the end of this week.

Jointly organised by Malaysia-China Business Council (MCBC) and Huawei, the forum brought together industry players from both countries to brainstorm on accelerating the digitalisation of the Malaysian economy.

Najib said the Government’s initiatives for digital economy in Budget 2017 included the establishment of the first-ever Digital Free Trade Zone (FTZ) in the world with attractive incentives and modalities.

The Digital FTZ would facilitate international e-commerce and energise innovation and creativity in Internet technology.

Other measures taken by the Government included setting up Malaysia Digital Hubs for start-ups, integration of computational thinking and computer science in nation-



**New gadget:** Najib admiring a latest smartphone after launching the Huawei Customer Solution Integration and Innovation Experience Centre before attending the Malaysia-China Digital Economy Forum in Kuala Lumpur. With him are (from left) Ding, Huawei Malaysia CEO Abraham Liu, Ong and Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh. — Bernama

al school curriculum beginning next January and using “mydigital-maker movement” to groom makers and innovators, instead of just consumers.

Najib said Malaysia’s digital economy contributed 17.8% to gross domestic product (GDP) in 2015.

“It has been estimated that a 20% increase in ICT investment will result in 1% GDP growth to a country. For Malaysia, the figure is even higher, at 1.4%,” he said.

Meanwhile, MCBC chairman Tan

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Sri Ong Ka Ting, who is also the Prime Minister’s special envoy to China, said there are many areas of collaboration to be explored between Malaysia and China to jointly develop this new industry to stay ahead of the competition.

“For Malaysia to take part in this

new economic landscape, it is important to have synergy with strong digital economy-based countries such as China to help our entrepreneurs and industry,” he said.

With 721 million Internet users and 20 trillion yuan (RM12.28 trillion) in e-commerce transaction value, Ong said China’s market was too enormous to be ignored.

“Digital economy is the way forward to revitalise the engine of growth in light of the slowdown of

global trade volume.

“It is timely now for Malaysian entrepreneurs to transform and tap into this industry and expand beyond to other countries given (the Government’s) strong support,” Ong said.

Huawei Technologies executive director cum products and solutions president Ryan Ding outlined the company’s “Subur” agenda for a more connected Malaysia that would spur its ICT development.

Among its plans included providing better mobile and broadband coverage, safe city solutions, and nurturing talents through collaboration with the Higher Education Ministry.

Commenting on his visit to China later this week, Najib said in a statement that he looked forward to meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang.

Both countries would sign many new agreements and memorandums of understanding that would push their bilateral ties to greater heights.

Hailing the arrival of the “Asian Century”, Najib said few countries represent the potential of the region better than China and Malaysia.

“Together, working in partnership, I am confident that if we grasp the huge opportunities before us, we will transform the lives of our people and reshape the region and the world for the better,” he said.



Huawei and i-City tie-up  
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