

Dr M to call for transparency at Beijing summit

By TARRENCE TAN
tarrence@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: A special call for transparency will be made by Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at China's second summit on Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Beijing, says International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Darell Leiking.

"The PM will address this. The exciting bit about our Prime Minister is that he will go up on stage and say his piece, which could sometimes shock or disrupt the world.

"Most of the time, although it's

shocking and disrupting to some, they respect the idea because it's a beautiful idea," he told a joint interview with media outlets.

He said this when asked to elaborate on his deputy Ong Kian Ming's recent remarks that transparency would be Putrajaya's main priority if it participates in BRI.

The cost of building the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL), which Malaysia has managed to reduce by a whopping RM21.5bil from the original sum, is among several mega infrastructure projects under BRI.

Leiking stressed that the government would ensure transparency in the ECRL project.

"The Prime Minister has also said: 'Don't let go of our sovereignty.' So we must ensure there are local people who will be managing and heading this project," he said.

Leiking's comment came as the second BRI summit is set to take place in Beijing from April 25 to 27.

Dr Mahathir, who is scheduled to attend it, will be accompanied by Leiking, **Transport** Minister Anthony Loke, and Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change Minister Yeo Bee Yin.

Meanwhile, in addressing the trade war between China and the US, Leiking said the two global superpowers must have a sense of

global responsibility in their negotiations because any decision made would have an impact on all economies in the world.

"We told the Americans, just as we told our Chinese counterparts, that you cannot think of yourself alone.

"We told them that your (US) success as an economy does not only come from the Americans themselves but from interactive trade with small countries like ours.

"So your success is partly because of us," he said in elaborating the remarks he made during a trade and investment mission to the US earlier this month.