

PM: We're committed to bolstering ties with China

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia is committed to strengthening relations with China to achieve a closer and more meaningful cooperation, says Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said trade and investment growth between both countries in recent years had been meteoric and this trend would continue to generate more opportunities in the areas of tourism, science and technology, as well as cultural exchanges.

He said this in a message in the souvenir book published by the Malaysia-China Friendship Association, or better known as PPMC, to mark the 45th

anniversary of diplomatic ties between both countries.

Dr Mahathir said that if in the initial stages, it was more of government to government relations, the partnership had scaled numerous levels and chalked up milestones, with China emerging as Malaysia's biggest trading partner today.

"China's astonishing growth in the last few decades that catapulted it to become the world's second biggest economy had contributed much to its extensive presence not only in Malaysia but also in other parts of the world.

"Our cooperation has grown at

various levels and sectors.

"I believe apart from the roles played by government and political leaders, various associations and non-governmental organisations, including PPMC, have contributed much to the strong and positive state of affairs enjoyed by both countries," he added.

The Prime Minister said it was in June 1993 when he witnessed the signing of the memorandum of understanding between PPMC and its sister organisation - the China-Malaysia Friendship Association - in Beijing during one of his many official visits to China.

"I wish to congratulate PPMC for being able to sustain the friendship all these years and taking it to a higher level," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that despite the changes of leadership in both countries, the partnership had remained constant through the years, thanks to their adherence to the principle of non-interference in each other's domestic affairs and striving to be good neighbours.

"I have always believed in the principle of 'prosper thy neighbour' and as China prospered, it has in turn prospered Malaysia as well," he added.

On China's Belt and Road, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had taken the position of supporting the initiative as the benefits were mutually shared and distributed.

He said for Malaysia, it was a continuation of the ancient trade, and trading between both countries had never diminished for centuries.

PPMC was formed in 1992.

In April 2005, veteran diplomat and former Malaysian ambassador to China Datuk Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan was elected the PPMC president.

He still holds the office until today. — Bernama