

A NEW JOURNEY IN SPRING BEGINS



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Malaysia, China need to strengthen cooperation, stand closer together in dealing with international issues

SPRING is the season of hope and joy when everything bursts into life. The official visit to China by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who departed from Beijing Capital International Airport in early spring, was a great success.

It was a historic visit with a number of firsts. It was the first meeting between leaders of China and Malaysia after both recently concluded the formation of new-term governments.

Anwar is among the first group of foreign dignitaries received by China's new-term government. This is also his first visit to China since taking office.

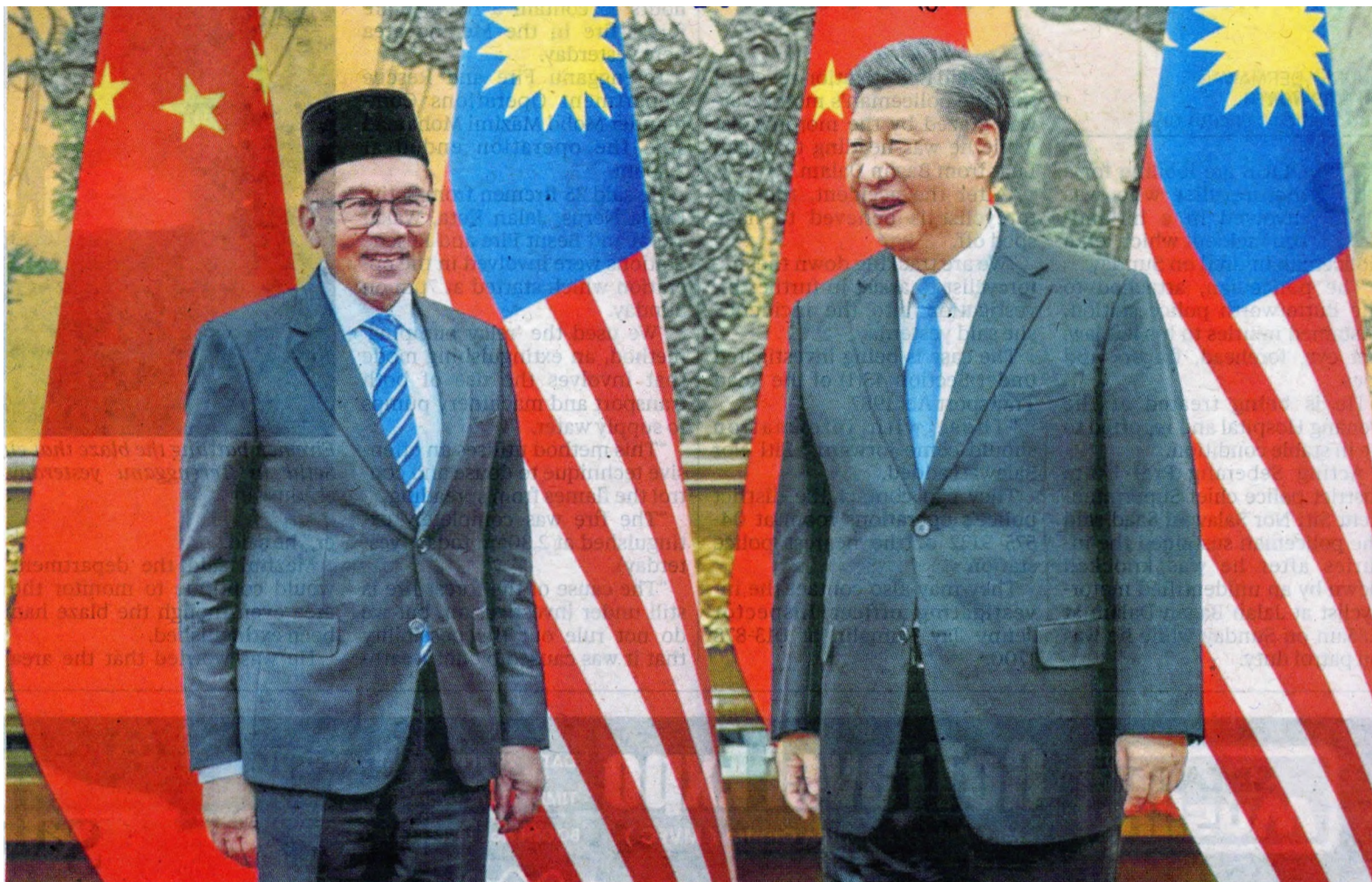
President Xi Jinping met Anwar on March 31 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, where the two leaders reached a consensus on jointly building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future.

It is the most important political achievement of the visit. Building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future is a continuation of the millennium-old friendship between the two nations.

Xi and Anwar recalled the history of Admiral Zheng He's (Cheng Ho) seven voyages to the "Western Ocean" dating back 600 years ago, five of which included visits to Melaka.

Anwar also spoke about the Bukit Cina and Chinese mosques in Melaka, and commented: "The significance of Admiral Zheng He's voyages has gone far beyond that of economic exchanges. It is the communication of cultures and convergence of civilisations."

The vision of building a China-Malaysia community with a



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Chinese President Xi Jinping have reached a consensus on jointly building a Malaysia-China community with a shared future. PIC COURTESY OF PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

shared future bears the same spirit as the core of the convergence of two civilisations.

Xi and Anwar exchanged their understanding of philosophical issues, worldviews, social values and world civilisations.

Anwar smiled in agreement when Xi quoted the famous Confucius saying of "Zheng Zhe Zheng Ye" (To govern means to rectify) in their talks.

The warm talks and spiritual resonance between the two leaders impressed all.

Building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future is a vivid reflection of the win-win cooperation between our two countries.

During this visit, Premier Li Qiang and Anwar witnessed the signing of a series of cooperation documents between the two countries covering economy and trade, agriculture and customs service.

Anwar's delegation had 300 Malaysian entrepreneurs.

They followed him all the way to Beijing to do their bit to boost the economy.

A total of 1,000 business leaders from both countries gathered to exchange views and share wis-

dom, working hard to promote China-Malaysia relations.

Nineteen business memoranda of understanding were signed during the visit.

They are worth a record-high RM170 billion.

Building a community with a shared future adds new footnotes to China-Malaysia's "weathering-through-thick-and-thin" brotherhood.

Anwar told Li that "Malaysia and China are friends sharing weal and woe together.

"Malaysians from all walks of life are committed to strengthening friendship with China. The unity government takes enhancing friendly relations with China as a priority."

At the Boao Forum, Li and Anwar called for the strengthening of unity and cooperation to jointly cope with risks and challenges. This adds certainty to world peace and development.

"Many of the ideas and proposals pioneered by President Xi Jinping, especially the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind, coincide with the idea of 'Malaysia Madani'.

"This is the reason why we have

chosen to openly support this vision."

Anwar's statement at the end of the visit showed his high expectations of the development of China-Malaysia relations, and his recognition of the vision of building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future.

Leaders of both countries have mapped out the blueprint for future relations.

How should we implement this blueprint and bring benefits to peoples of both countries and the region? I would like to share my perspective.

Building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future is a great vision.

We must enhance development strategy alignment, deepen high-quality cooperation, organically integrate the realisation of Chinese modernisation with the implementation of Malaysia Madani and bring more benefits to peoples of both countries.

We should advocate the Asian civilisation, support Asean centrality and jointly push for the implementation of the Global Development Initiative, Security Initiative and Civilisation Initiative.

We should jointly make new contributions to the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

Building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future requires specific tasks.

We must continue to implement the Belt and Road Initiative flagship projects, which will produce development and job opportunities in local areas.

"Two Countries, Twin Parks" and the East Coast Rail Link are two signature projects.

We need to strengthen cooperation in agricultural trade, cultural and educational exchanges, and people-to-people connection programmes.

Also, we should stand closer with each other in dealing with international issues and jointly safeguard our common interests.

A Chinese saying tells: "Spring is the best season to start implementing the whole year's plan."

We are now rightly in this best season. Let's start our new journey in spring and sail towards the bright, shared future of a China-Malaysia community.

The writer is ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Malaysia