

Towards a bright shared future

China-Malaysia relations on firm footing with Prime Minister's recent visit

COMMENT by Ouyang Yujing

SPRING is the season of hope and joy, when everything bursts into life. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's official visit to China ended with great success when his plane departed from Beijing Capital International Airport this early spring.

This was a historic visit with a number of firsts. It was the first meeting between the leaders of China and Malaysia, with both having just finished their respective new-term government formations.

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

President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister Anwar on the afternoon of March 31 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, where the two leaders reached a consensus on jointly building the China-Malaysia community with a shared future. It was the most important political achievement of the visit.

Building the China-Malaysia community with a shared future is the continuation of the millennium-old friendship between China and Malaysia.

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

Anwar also spoke about the "Bukit Cina" and Chinese mosques in Melaka and commented on the significance of Admiral Zheng He's voyages having gone far beyond that of economic exchanges, saying it was the communication of cultures and the convergence of civilisations.

The vision of building the China-Malaysia community with a shared future bears the same spirit as the core of the convergence of two civilisations.

Xi and Anwar exchanged their understandings on philosophical issues, world views, social values,



Warm reception: Xi welcoming Anwar at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing during the Prime Minister's official visit last month. — SADIQ ASYRAF/ Prime Minister's Office

world civilisations, etc. Anwar smiled with agreement when hearing Xi quote the famous Confucius saying "Zheng Zhe Zheng Ye (To govern means to rectify)" during their talks. The warm talks and spiritual resonance between the two leaders impressed all present.

Building the China-Malaysia community with a shared future is a vivid reflection of the win-win cooperation between our two countries. During the visit, Premier Li Qiang and Anwar jointly witnessed the signing of a series of cooperation documents between the two countries covering areas of economy and trade, agriculture, customs service, etc.

Three hundred members of Anwar's delegation were Malaysian entrepreneurs who followed him all the way to Beijing to contribute their bit to boosting the economy.

A thousand business leaders

from both countries gathered together to exchange views and share wisdom, working hard to jointly promote the development of China-Malaysia relations.

Nineteen business MOUs were signed as a fruitful outcome of the visit, the total value of which amounted to RM170bil, hitting a new record high in history.

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

Anwar clearly told Li that "Malaysia and China are friends sharing weal and woe together. Malaysians of all walks of life are committed to strengthening their friendship with China. The unity government takes further developing friendly relations with China as its priority task".

Both prime ministers called for strengthening unity and cooperation to jointly cope with risks and

challenges at the Boao Forum held in Hainan, which adds certainty to world peace and development.

"Many of the ideas and proposals pioneered by President Xi, 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 for the future development of China-Malaysia relations and his full recognition of the vision of building the China-Malaysia community with a shared future.

Leaders of both countries have mapped out the blueprint for China-Malaysia's future relations and pointed out the direction we are to follow.

Then, how should we implement the blueprint and bring tangible benefit to the people of both

countries and the region? I would like to share my perspective as follows:

Building the China-Malaysia community with a shared future is a great vision. We must further enhance development strategy alignment, deepen high-quality cooperation, organically integrate the realisation of Chinese modernisation with the implementation of "Malaysia Madani", and bring more benefit to the peoples of both countries.

We should advocate for Asian civilisation, support Asean centrality and jointly push forward 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 to be done.

We must continue to fully implement the flagship Belt and Road Initiative projects, which will both bring development opportunities to local areas and job opportunities to local people.

"Two Countries, Twin Parks" and the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) are two signature ones.

We need to strengthen cooperation in agricultural trade, enhance cultural and educational exchanges, and carry out more 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 says, "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 the spring and sail towards the bright shared future of the China-Malaysia community!

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