

# 'STRONGER CHINA TIES VITAL FOR OUR GROWTH'

**Anwar says  
Malaysia will  
integrate China  
into regional affairs**

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**P**RIME Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has underscored the importance of stronger ties with China, saying it is vital in securing the long-term interests of Malaysia and its people.

"We believe that it is in Malaysia's strategic interests to forge amity and cooperation with China, not against it.

"We make every effort to diplomatically engage China and integrate it into regional affairs, not because it is always straightforward, but because it is crucial for our shared future."

He said this in a speech at a dinner celebrating 50 years of Malaysian-Chinese ties yesterday.

Present was Chinese Premier Li Qiang, who is on a three-day official visit.

Anwar paid tribute to past leaders of both countries for taking the bold step to establish diplomatic ties in 1974.

"At the time, it took immense courage and wisdom from the leaders on both sides to make a leap of faith and forge a new relationship across what was once an impenetrable ideological wall.

"Their actions demonstrate that the future is not claimed by those who dwell in the past or fear the unknown.

"It is the bold dreamers and the brave souls who dare to strive that shape the world, and make it their own.

"Our bilateral partnership has blossomed from the seat of political power to the bustling economic markets to the hallowed halls of academia and beyond."

He said Malaysia's "firm and robust" trade relationship with China was underscored by the fact the republic had been the country's largest trading partner for the past 15 years.

He said China's Belt and Road Initiative, as well as the "Two Countries, Twin Parks", East Coast Rail Link and Automotive High-Tech Valley projects would boost the economy, drive growth



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Chinese Premier Li Qiang exchanging coffee table books to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Malaysian-Chinese diplomatic ties at a dinner in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

and create jobs.

"To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Malaysia-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership last year, I had the opportunity to embark on several visits to China.

"I had a historic meeting with President Xi Jinping as well as Premier Li Qiang in Beijing."

These visits, he said, had led to stronger and more advanced bilateral cooperation in trade and investment, education, agriculture, tourism, food security and the digital economy.

Meanwhile, Bernama reported that Malaysia and China had agreed to establish a Joint Working Group on Single Window Cooperation to identify the best strategies for implementing single window cooperation.

This initiative, spearheaded by the Finance Ministry under the National Single Window programme, was announced by Anwar.

Anwar, who is finance minister, said the single window cooperation could boost cross-border trade clearance.

This would be achieved by digitalising trade regulatory processes, eliminating redundant documentation, and facilitating seamless and accurate information exchange among stakeholders and trade partners.

"Efforts to develop single window cooperation also fulfil the Madani Economy framework's aspirations, which emphasise digital transformation and ease

of doing business as key thrusts to accelerate economic development."

The agreement on single window cooperation was formalised in a joint statement by the Finance Ministry and the General Administration of Customs of China.

The statement was signed by Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan and Chinese General Administration of Customs Minister Yu Jianhua.

In the first quarter of 2024, Malaysia's trade with China increased to RM112.28 billion, up from RM108.66 billion the previous year.

This included RM44.5 billion in exports from Malaysia to China and RM67.78 billion in imports from China.

Meanwhile, Anwar posted on X that the meeting he held with Li touched on regional geopolitical issues and those related to common interests.

These, he said, include potential Asean-China cooperation under Malaysia's chairmanship next year, the One China Policy and the situation in the South China Sea.

"I expressed the need for China to play a role in the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar, in addition to expressing my appreciation for China's firm support for Palestine.

"I also took the opportunity to invite President Xi Jinping to pay an official visit to Malaysia as soon as possible."