

KL, BEIJING EXTEND VISA-FREE SCHEME

Li's visit ends with both nations agreeing to boost exchange of skills and technology.

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CHINESE Premier Li Qiang's three-day official visit to Malaysia ended on a high note with Malaysia and China strengthening ties with further visa exemptions, the exchange of skills and technology, and a commitment to maintain regional security.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Li, in a joint statement, said Malaysia would extend the visa exemption for Chinese travellers until the end of 2026.

The two leaders said they welcomed the keen interest in continuing consultations and discussions on mutual visa exemptions to facilitate the entry of Malaysian and Chinese citizens.

"Both leaders supported efforts on visa exemptions to promote friendly relations, whereby China agreed to extend the facility until the end of 2025.

"To reciprocate, Malaysia will extend the visa exemption until the end of 2026."

On May 31, it was reported that China had agreed to extend visa exemption for Malaysian tourists from 15 to 30 days.

China extended its visa-free policy for short-term visits to the republic for Malaysia and 11 other nations until the end of 2025.

Last November, Anwar had announced a 30-day visa exemption for tourists from China and India starting Dec 1 of the same year.

On a separate issue, both leaders said China was willing to share with Malaysia its experience in poverty reduction and rural revitalisation, as well as provide aid to improve the wellbeing of Malaysians.

The two sides agreed to make good use of the mechanism of the Joint Working Group on Agricultural Cooperation to strengthen



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Chinese Premier Li Qiang attending the Malaysia-China Business Community luncheon in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

cooperation on agricultural modernisation and agricultural technology innovation.

They agreed that China would import more high-quality agricultural, electrical and electronic, halal and green products from Malaysia.

They said this would be done through the participation of Chinese buyers in the International Sourcing Programmes organised by the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation during international trade exhibitions in Malaysia.

The two leaders affirmed that China and Malaysia would seize opportunities provided by the signing of the Belt and Road Cooperation Plan.

Anwar and Li agreed to strengthen cooperation in trade, investment, infrastructure connectivity, including rail transportation, infrastructure cooperation and to contribute and support the vision of a Pan-Asian Railway.

"Both sides will continue to promote key projects, including Malaysia's East Coast Rail Link and the 'Two Countries, Twin Parks' between China and Malaysia, further expand trade, strengthen financial cooperation, encourage two-way investment, strengthen exchanges and cooperation in intellectual property, and provide a good business environment for bilateral economic and trade exchanges."

Anwar and Li said the two countries would seize opportunities to develop the digital economy, green development, artifi-

cial intelligence and energy.

A bilateral meeting held during Li's visit to Malaysia led to both sides agreeing about the importance of maintaining peace, security and stability in the South China Sea.

Both leaders said both countries agreed to resolve disputes by peaceful means through friendly consultations and negotiations.

"The two sides will work together with other Asean countries to implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in its entirety and look forward to the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea."

Malaysia and China agreed to expand cooperation in the defence industry and boost exchanges on 'national security, while emphasising their mutual opposition to terrorism and commitment to strengthening law enforcement and anti-terrorism cooperation.

Malaysia and China reaffirmed the stand that Palestinians deserve their right to self-determination.

They urged the United Nations Security Council to reconsider Palestine's application for full membership, in line with the resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on May 10.

Page 1 pic: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Chinese Premier Li Qiang at the Malaysia-China Business Community luncheon yesterday