

Melaka Offers To Be Hub For China's Products To Southeast Asia
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 30 (Bernama) -- Melaka, a great trading empire in the 15th century with close links to China, offered to be the hub for China's products destined for Southeast Asia.

Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam, on a two-day visit to China, said Melaka's strategic location at the international shipping route made it a conducive base for the import to and export of goods from China.

Melaka's position is such that it is close to Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Sumatra of Indonesia, he said in a statement sent to Bernama from Beijing Monday.

Mohd Ali said trade between China and Melaka can be facilitated by the Malay World Islamic World (DMDI) secretariats based in Melaka and in China's Muslim autonomous Yinchuan province.

"In my meetings with the Chinese Muslim entrepreneurs in China, I found that they are keen to forge collaboration with entrepreneurs in Malaysia, particularly in the 'halal' food, agriculture and textile industries," he said in the statement.

He advised Malaysian entrepreneurs to take advantage of the interest shown by the Chinese entrepreneurs to establish or expand the trade links.

Mohd Ali, who arrived in Beijing Sunday, visited the 370-year-old Nan Xia Po Mosque and met the Muslim community living in the vicinity.

The mosque, located on the outskirts of Beijing, was also visited by former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak when he was the deputy prime minister.

Mohd Ali then flew to Yinchuan (about two hours by flight from Beijing) to launch the DMDI secretariat.

The Melaka chief minister also held meetings with the entrepreneurs of Yinchuan province on potential bilateral trade. Thirty-two per cent of the three million people of Yinchuan are Muslims.

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