

Dinner To Welcome China's Jia Qinglin
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 6 (Bernama) -- With the efforts made by past Malaysian prime ministers, Malaysia-China relationship has become closer and friendlier, the scope of cooperation has been broadened and deepened, and seeing more tangible results, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said his father, second Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak made Malaysia the first Southeast Asian country to establish diplomatic ties with China, thus normalising Malaysia-China friendship and paving the way for the development of a close and warm friendship.

Najib who had thrice met with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in the last year said they discussed proposals of joint venture projects which could bring benefits to the people.

"The Qinzhou Industrial Park, from its conception to implementation, and the Kuantan Industrial Park from a mere proposal to its launching yesterday, have been very significant to us and of critical importance to our long term development," he said.

Najib's message was read by the Prime Minister's Special Envoy to China, Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting Wednesday night, at a welcoming reception hosted by Chinese organisations to welcome Jia Qinglin, the chairman of the National Committee of the People's Political Consultative Conference of China(CPPCC).

"The follow-up mutual recognition of university qualification, youth exchange programme and the panda project are testimony of the two countries' cooperation new milestone," he added.

Following this, Chinese government made a historical decision in approving the establishment of an overseas campus by Xiamen University, a top 20 Chinese university.

Najib pledged to give the full support and render assistance for the development of the campus.

The Prime Minister witnessed the signing ceremony of Memorandum of Agreement(MOA) between Xiamen University Sunsuria Development of Malaysia with Jia Qinglin last night.

Bilateral trade between Malaysia and China has grown rapidly since 2009 and China has become Malaysia's largest trade partner, while Malaysia has also become China's largest trade partner among ASEAN countries.

Najib believed that such an encouraging uptrend can be sustained so that there would be even more breakthrough in economics, trade, educational and cultural exchanges as well as at people's level, and lead to win-win situation in the future. The dinner was jointly organised by Malaysia-China Business Council, Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Malaysia, Huazong, Malaysia-China Friendship Association, Malaysia-China Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Malaysia Association Supporting One-China Policy and the Co-ordinating Committee of the Seven Chinese Clans Associations.

Jia Qinglin who described his four-day-visit to Malaysia as fruitful and successful said he had a productive meeting with Najib and reached important agreement on furthering bilateral

strategic cooperation, besides witnessing the launching ceremony of Kuantan Industrial Park.

He said Malaysia and China had witnessed rapid growth of relations by having strategic cooperation in many areas, and also strengthened political mutual trust.

"In 2011, bilateral trade exceeded US\$90 billion, ten times the amount 10 years ago. In the same period, China's non-financial direct investment in Malaysia increased from US\$34.7 million to US\$630 million, and Malaysia's investment in China doubled."

"Two Confucius institutes in Malaysia and a Malay Research Centre in China were set up via joint efforts between two countries. The number of Chinese students in Malaysia and Malaysian students in China has reached 14,000. There are nearly 3,000,000 mutual visits between two countries every year," he added.

Jia said China's development has given a strong boost to the development of the countries in the region, and contributed enormously to peace, stability and prosperity in Asia.

"Over the past 10 years, the trade between China and its neighbourhood has grown from US\$170 billion to US\$1 trillion, while its investment in these countries has also seen double digit growth annually."

As China and its neighbourhood are working hard to meet their respective goals, China aims to reach US\$8 trillion during its 12th Five-Year Plan while Malaysia is working to realise Vision 2020, greater potential and energy of cooperation will be unleashed, said Jia.

Meanwhile, Ong Ka Ting who is also Chairman of the Malaysia-China Business Council appreciated the Chinese leadership for its strong support and special care and attention to the Malaysian Chinese community in the past 10 years, especially by Wen Jiabao and Jia Qinglin.

He said the local Chinese organisations have been working hard in contributing forwards the close rapport and friendship between Malaysia and China over the past decades.

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