

Najib Hopes For Malaysia-China Ties To Remain Strong
Bernama
4 Oct, 2013

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 4 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak on Friday expressed the hope that the deep-rooted relations between Malaysia and China would continue to remain strong.

In his latest Facebook post, Najib said he gave an interview to China's Xinhua News Agency and CCTV China on the relationship between the two nations on the eve of the state visit to Malaysia by China's President Xi Jinping.

"China has been a good friend to Malaysia for 40 years and, with the visit which begins Thursday (yesterday), I hope the close ties between our two countries is reaffirmed and transcends all levels of our societies," he said.

Xi arrived in Malaysia yesterday for a three-day state visit on the second stop of his maiden trip to Southeast Asia after taking office in March.

Xi's visit is of utmost importance as it signals the commitment of the new Chinese leadership to maintain the longstanding friendly relations with Kuala Lumpur since the establishment of diplomatic relations 39 years ago.

In his interview with Xinhua and CCTV China, Najib said Xi's visit signalled Beijing's desire to keep up warm ties with Malaysia, which he believed will advance on a strong footing under China's new leadership.

The two Chinese media quoted Najib as saying that Malaysia was seeking to enhance ties with China and tap new areas of cooperation.

"The two countries should make their relations more multi-faceted and pervasive by including more areas for cooperation, such as education, technology and finance.

"Moreover, Malaysia welcomes more Chinese investment into the country, which is an important part of bilateral cooperation," said Najib, noting that several new investment deals will be inked during Xi's visit.

Najib said Malaysia and China shared common ground on many multilateral issues, and urged the two sides to work closely together in their pursuit of peace, stability and prosperity for the whole region.

Malaysia was the first among Asean members to establish diplomatic ties with China and the two sides will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations next year.

Najib said he plans to visit China and looks forward to working out with Beijing on major events to mark the anniversary.

Najib said Malaysia-China relations have developed by "leaps and bounds" since 1974 when his late father Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, then the Malaysian prime minister, paid a historic visit to Beijing and forged ties with China.

Bilateral trade between China and Malaysia hit US\$94.8 billion last year, with China being Malaysia's biggest trading partner for four consecutive years and Malaysia being the biggest trading partner of China in the Asean region for the past five years.

Excerpts of the Najib interview can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/17w2tGG>

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