

**Dr Mahathir Proposes Association In Memory Of Admiral Cheng Ho**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 5 (Bernama) -- Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has proposed that Malaysia and China set up a business and trade association to serve as platform to further boost the bilateral relationships of the two countries.

Making the proposal to China's President Xi Jinping during a meeting here today, the former prime minister proposed that the association be called the 'Cheng Ho Multi-cultural and Friendship Association'.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting at a hotel here, Dr Mahathir said the idea for the association was also to remember the Ming Dynasty seafarer Admiral Cheng Ho's contributions to the Malaysia-China relationship.

"He (Xi) is very supportive of that proposal," he said, adding that he hoped the association could be set up soon.

Xi ended his three-day state visit to Malaysia today.

Dr Mahathir noted that Xi had also voiced concern over the shipping congestion issue at the Straits of Melaka.

"We need to reduce the number of ships passing through the Straits by building a pipeline in the north to take the oil and other products across the Peninsular without having to go around the Peninsular.

"So, he (Xi) will consider this because he thinks this is a good idea and he will see what he can do to support it," he added.

Other issues discussed in the hour-long meeting included intensifying trade volume between both countries, said Dr Mahathir.

"We like to see more Chinese investments in Malaysia. At the moment, Malaysia's investment in China is more than Chinese investments in Malaysia," he added.

Dr Mahathir had also invited Xi to encourage more Chinese to invest in the Rubber City and the Automotive Components City, to be built at Kota Putra, situated at the Malaysia-Thai border.

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