

**Najib Holds Bilateral Meeting with Chinese Counterpart**  
**Bernama**  
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**By D. Arul Rajoo**

BEIJING, May 29 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak was accorded a grand welcome at the Great Hall of the People here Thursday, the same venue where his father and second Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein created history by establishing diplomatic ties with China 40 years ago.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang welcomed Najib at the Great Hall of the People which houses the National People's Congress, the highest legislative body of the People's Republic of China.

A 19-gun salute was fired before the national anthems of both countries were played. Accompanied by Li, Najib inspected a guard-of-honour mounted by several officers and men from the country's three military services.

Najib had flown to the Chinese capital about an hour earlier from Penang after having interrupted his six-day official visit to China to return to Malaysia Wednesday night to pay his last respects to the late Sultan of Perak, Sultan Azlan Shah, in Kuala Kangsar Thursday morning.

Najib and Li Keqiang held their bilateral meeting at the Hebi Room in the East Hall.

Najib is leading a 15-member delegation that includes Defence Minister and acting Transport Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein; Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman; Prime Minister's Special Envoy to China Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting; International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed; Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob; Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Idris Haron and Malaysian Ambassador to China Datuk Iskandar Sarudin. The leaders then witnessed the signing of six memorandums of understanding (MOU) at the government-to-government level, namely Defence Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence; Executive Programme for Cultural Cooperation and Exchange of Instrument on the Establishment of new Chinese consulates in Kota Kinabalu and Penang, and a new Malaysian consulate in Nanning.

Also signed today were the Minutes on Strengthening Economic and Trade Cooperation between China's Ministry of Commerce (Mofcom) and Malaysia's Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Miti); an MOU between the China Post Group and Pos Malaysia and an MOU on promoting industrial cooperation between China's investment promotion agency of the Ministry of Commerce and the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (Mida), the East Coast Economic Region (ECER) and the China-Malaysia Qinzhou Industrial Park.

The Chinese Premier then hosted a dinner for the Malaysian delegation. It was in the same building that Tun Abdul Razak signed a joint communique with the late Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai on establishing diplomatic relations between Malaysia and China in 1974.

Malaysia was the first among the Asean countries which initiated diplomatic ties with the world's second largest economy.

China, with a population of 1.36 billion, has been Malaysia's largest trading partner since 2009, while Malaysia continued to be China's top trading partner in Asean since 2008.

Last year, bilateral trade between the two nations amounted to US\$106 billion (RM339 billion), and both Malaysia and China have agreed to boost the two-way trade to US\$160 billion (RM511 billion) by 2017. Najib, who arrived in China on Tuesday with a stopover in the ancient city of Xian, is scheduled to pay a courtesy call on Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday. While in Beijing, he is also scheduled to witness the signing of inter-governmental memorandums of understanding involving bilateral trade and political cooperation; visit the Beijing Foreign Studies University and Huawei Research and Development Centre and perform Friday prayers at the Niujie Mosque.

He is also scheduled to attend an economic summit with Chinese entrepreneurs in Beijing, while the highlight of the visit is the Malaysia-China 40th anniversary celebrations to commemorate the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries, on Saturday, at the Great Hall of People.

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