

MH370 Incident does Not Affect Malaysia-China Ties

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BEIJING, May 29 (Bernama) -- The close ties between Malaysia and China are not affected by the disappearance of the Malaysia Airlines (MAS) flight MH370, on the other hand, it further strengthened the diplomatic ties established 40 years ago, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

The Malaysian Prime Minister said that at the initial stage of the disappearance of the MH370 flight on March 8 there was of course an impact, but this did not hinder bilateral relations between the two nations.

In fact, the close ties and positive environment could clearly be seen during his visit here, especially at the bilateral meeting with the Chinese delegation led by China's Prime Minister Li Keqiang at the Great hall of the People Thursday.

"There was an acceptable and positive mood during our meeting and at the dinner. I struck a very good working relationship with the Premier," he said at the media conference with Malaysian journalists covering his six-day visit to China beginning Tuesday.

In fact, he had invited Li to visit Malaysia this year.

Asked whether the Chinese government had raised the issue on the MH370 incident at the meeting today, Najib said China had given a commitment to continue the cooperation and aid provided until the next phase as had been agreed in the tripartite agreement between China, Malaysia and Australia.

Almost two-thirds of the passengers of the MH370 which carried 239 people were Chinese nationals.

In his opening remark at the bilateral meeting held at the Great Hall of People earlier, Li said China was saddened by the incident and had been working closely with Malaysia and other nations in the search operation.

He said China hoped that Malaysia would continue the search operation to determine what had really transpired.

"(I) Hope Malaysia continues to lead the search effort, undertake serious investigation into the incident to give soothing comfort to the family and next of kin," the Chinese leader said.

Li also said it was a remarkable year as it marked the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Malaysia, and it had also been designated as China-Malaysia

Year of Friendship Exchanges.

"The ancient people in China said that at 40, one should no longer have any doubts. Your excellency is embarking on this special visit to China at the important 40th anniversary year in our bilateral relationship to celebrate this important occasion," he said.

Li also cited the historical moment 40 years ago when Najib's father and the second prime minister, Tun Abdul Razak Hussain, and Chinese premier Zhou en-lai signed the communique establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries.

"That helped to open a new chapter in relations between China and Malaysia and opened the door to diplomatic relations between our two countries. Your excellency has carried on the will and legacy of your late father and has been working to carry forward the friendship between our two nations and push forward good relations between China and Malaysia," said Li.

In fact, he said Najib's current visit was not just meant to commemorate the important occasion 40 years ago but also to help both nations to take the relationship into the future.

In his opening remark at the meeting, Najib said he had been looking forward to the trip because it was going to be very significant and in a way historic due to the 40th anniversary.

Najib said what was more important than that was the underpinning, underlying message that this relationship had not only prospered over 40 years but it had involved two generations of leaders.

"So if the Chinese proverb says if after 40 years, you should not have any doubts, I would like to say that coupled with the fact that two generation of leaders not only me but Datuk Seri Hishammuddin, for example, is son of the third prime minister and previous leaders, we all worked hard to make this relations very successful and a very important relationship," he added.

Saying that the visit was a testimony to Malaysia's enduring commitment that not for a short period of time but encompassing two generations and future generations as well, Najib said the tone and future direction of bilateral relations have been set when Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Malaysia last year.

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