

Malaysia, China Renew Bond of Friendship
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BEIJING, May 31 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and China on Saturday renewed the bond of friendship that was established four decades ago.

In a brief yet meaningful ceremony at the sprawling Great Hall of the People facing Tiananmen Square here, leaders from both countries were joined by diplomats, business community and youths who represent the future generation, to commemorate the historic event that took place 40 years ago at the same venue.

Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and his Chinese counterpart Li Keqiang graced the occasion held at the West Hall of the Great Hall of the People.

It was at the same hall that Najib's father and second prime minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein set out on a journey of goodwill to sow the seeds of mutual understanding and trust.

It was here, on May 31, 1974 that Tun Abdul Razak Hussein signed an agreement with Premier Zhou Enlai, formally establishing diplomatic ties between the two countries.

At the event today, Najib and Li signed a joint communique to further broaden and deepen cooperation in all areas of mutual benefit - economic, tourism, financial services, political, cultural and military.

Both countries also agreed to exchange more students, work closely on disaster relief and preserve stability and security in the region.

Najib also presented a set of commemorative stamps issued by Bank Negara to Li while the latter presented the visiting Malaysian leader with a set of commemorative stamps issued by China Post.

The friendship that began during the Song dynasty flourished under the Ming, as a relationship build on trade was strengthened by blood - as Chinese families made the Straits of Melaka their home.

Malaysia was the first Southeast Asian country to establish relations with China and over the past four decades, friendship and business ties between the two has developed tremendously.

China is Malaysia's largest trading partner, and Malaysia is China's largest trading partner in Asean.

Both countries have formed a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for prosperity and growth, and last year, they signed the Five-Year Development Programme for Economic and Trade Cooperation.

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