

Najib Describes China Visit as Most Fruitful

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By D.Arul Rajoo

BEIJING, June 1 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has described his six-day official visit to China this time as most successful, and China's top leaders describe the relationship with Malaysia as something 'special'.

"I consider my official visit to China, in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and China, as having received very encouraging response," he told a media conference before leaving for Malaysia.

Najib said that in his meeting with President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Keqiang, both the country's top leaders had emphasised that Malaysia-China relations were most important, and they described it as being most special.

"They give top priority to relations between China and Malaysia," he said.

According to Najib, from the commitment given and statements expressed by both the leaders, he was most optimistic and certain that future relations between China and Malaysia would be very bright and would be raised to a higher level.

In fact, he added, the treatment accorded was most cordial and Li, who was scheduled to attend a function outside Beijing, was prepared to reschedule his presence at an anniversary celebration at the Great Hall of People yesterday which was also a public holiday in conjunction with the "Dragon Boat Festival".

Asked about his feelings when attending the anniversary celebration at the same venue and date that his father and second prime minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein had signed the agreement for the establishment of diplomatic relations with China, Najib said he felt 'very emotional'.

"I feel most emotional for two reasons...firstly, the significance that this ceremony takes place at the same venue 40 years ago. And secondly, looking back at the situation in this region during the clod war, the communist threat in Malaysia then and the doubt felt by many regarding the Malaysia-China relations," he said.

Despite facing various obstacles, Najib said he could imagine how difficult it was for Tun Abdul Razak to make the decision at that time which now showed that it was clearly the right decision.

"What had been done by past leaders had put in place a strong foundation. This relationship is strong despite the various problems, including the MH370 issue. Looking at 40 years from now, based on this foundation, this relationship will bring greater progress," he said.

Based on this confidence, the Malaysian government would take follow-up action to realise all the resolutions and understanding that had been achieved, added Najib who visited the ancient city of Xi'an before coming to the national capital.

In order to enable more appropriate action to be taken from time to time and to ensure their effectiveness, Najib said he had also decided to set up a special committee for this purpose.

He said the committee would monitor and take the necessary follow-up action by Malaysia so that whatever problems or obstacles that might arise could be resolved more effectively and speedily.

"It's a committee within the government and we will invite the relevant ministries because now we have upgraded the relationship. It involves many ministries and it is important for us to know what one side is doing and coordinate all the action necessary in a timely manner, so that there will be a fresh momentum to the bilateral relations between Malaysia and China," he added.

"It will not be a scheduled meeting but it will be a meeting from time to time as and when necessary but at the minimum we will meet at least twice if not more in a year," he said.

Najib also said that although both countries had differing views on several issues, China stated that it was most comfortable with the approach and methods taken by Malaysia in handling them, especially on the issue on the South China Sea.

"We are not confrontational, we choose to negotiate. We consider that sensitive issues can be tackled rationally and calmly, not in a sensitive manner. The approach that we adopt clearly does not hamper relations," he added.

Asked whether China had sought Malaysia's help to become the intermediary in the

conflict with the Philippines and Vietnam concerning the issue on the South China Sea, Najib said they had not reached that level.

He said that as the future Asean Chairman in 2015, the issue on the South China Sea would certainly present a major challenge to Malaysia which must find a solution in a manner that would not result in tension.

"We will opt for negotiations and discussions...an approach that will ensure security and stability in the South China Sea," he added.

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