

China Considers Bilateral Ties The Best In History

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From M. Saraswathi

BOAO (Hainan, China), March 27 (Bernama) -- China considers bilateral relations with Malaysia currently to be at the best level in history, said visiting Malaysian prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

"He (China's president Xi Jinping) places ties between China and Malaysia as the top priority according to his opinion," he said after a bilateral meeting with Xi, here today.

He also hoped that the comprehensive strategic partnership would be strengthened and become more productive besides raising its outcome.

Najib, who is also the Malaysian finance minister, is here to attend the Boao Forum For Asia (BFA) 2015.

This represents his fifth official visit to China, and his first to the forum which was conceived after the annual World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

The prime minister said such visits were most important and beneficial as they could further strengthen the bilateral ties.

"Not only formally but also in terms of personal ties which make our relations stronger," he told the Malaysian media after the 45-minute bilateral meeting.

Najib said both leaders also touched on various issues including, trade, tourism, defence and education.

He said president Xi was happy with developments with regard to the Xiamen University.

He said they also spoke about the need to promote the arrival of more Chinese tourists to Malaysia.

He said that after two incidents, namely the MH370 tragedy and the abduction case in east Sabah, the number of tourists from China had declined more than nine per cent last year.

Thus, he said the government must make more determined efforts to restore the situation, among them the abolition of visa fees for tourists from China.

"This will help the Chinese people to visit Malaysia, and secondly, our initiative to open a consulate office in Nanning and Xi an, expected to materialise this year, will enable us to set up a visa processing centre.

"We have also discussed cooperation in the field of defence. There will be a first military

exercise between Malaysia and China," he said.

Najib said he was also thankful for the participation of China in the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA) Exhibition recently and the cooperation between the two nations in fighting terrorism was highly appreciated by China.

Najib said president Xi had also stated that China would give full cooperation to ensure the success of Malaysia's role as Asean chairman this year.

"They will fully support our initiatives," he said adding that China would also cooperate with Malaysia when Malaysia becomes a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council in the discussions for reforms.

Najib said he also thanked China for their help during the floods in Malaysia.

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