

Muhyiddin Calls For Strategic Action Plans On Malaysia's Engagement With China

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From Jamaluddin Muhammad

CHONGQING (China), Dec 5 (Bernama) -- Kuala Lumpur needs to draw up strategic action plans on its engagement with China so as to tap the full benefit from the cooperation, said Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said the plans must consist of short-term action and long-term action for five years on efforts that needed to be taken towards achieving targets.

"This must be carried out with well-planned action and follow-up action," he told Malaysian journalists here Friday after concluding his six-day official visit to China that covered visits to Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing since Sunday.

For example, he said, Malaysia needed a strategic action plan to achieve its target of US\$160 billion (RM528 billion) in Malaysia-China bilateral trade by 2017.

"If that's the case, we need 11 per cent bilateral trade growth every year. What are the goods that need to be exported, who are the Malaysian suppliers and how to achieve the growth target? These need to be detailed out for every sub-sector and sub-economy," he said.

Citing another example, Muhyiddin said Malaysia was aware that 500 million Chinese nationals travelled out of their country every year and there must be a strategic action plan to get some of them to visit Malaysia.

We must check our (flights) connectivity with big cities in this country. Do we have enough flights? he said.

He also said that when the Chinese government called on its state-owned enterprises to invest in Malaysia, initiatives must be made to trace them and facilitate them.

The deputy prime minister said he would make a proposal to the Cabinet on the strategic action plans as well as the setting up of a high-level committee chaired by the prime minister to look into the matter.

We need to relook our strategies in deriving the maximum benefit or we will be losing out. We must redouble our efforts and we must make quick decisions as well as take serious and quick action, he said.

If we take the Malaysian style in dealing with China ... we will be losing out, said Muhyiddin.

He said the Chinese government had shown its sincere commitment to cooperate closely with Malaysia and there was vast economic potential to be tapped.

During the visit, Muhyiddin met his counterpart Zhang Gaoli, Education Minister Yuan Guiren, captains of industry as well as the Malaysian community, all in Beijing.

He also visited the Huawei R&D Centre, and announced the setting up of the Internationalisation of Bahasa Melayu Centre at the Beijing Foreign Studies University in a move to uplift the lingua franca at the international level.

In Shanghai, Muhyiddin visited the Shanghai Normal (rpt) Normal University and said there was a plan to adopt Shanghai's success formula in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) as the province had earned the top spot while Malaysia was among the countries on the lower spots.

PISA examines the performance of 15-year-old students in Mathematics, Science, reading and problem-solving, and Malaysia scored below average in the four subjects.

Muhyiddin met another Chinese vice premier, Li Yuanchao, during the 6th World Chinese Economic Forum at which the Malaysian leader delivered a keynote address.

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