

China Visit a Phenomenal Success, says PM Najib

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From Hafizah Kamarudin

BEIJING, Nov 4 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has hailed his third official visit to China a phenomenal success, not only in consolidating bilateral relations but also securing tangible results for Malaysia.

His visit has resulted in the signing of 14 agreements on several iconic and mega projects to the tune of RM144 billion between Malaysian and Chinese companies that will contribute to Malaysia's socio-economic growth.

One of these projects, the double-track East Coast Rail Line (ECRL) connecting Kuala Lumpur and urban centres in the East Coast Economic Region such as Mentakab, Kuantan, Kuala Terengganu and Tumpat, will be a catalyst for transformation of the East Coast states of Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan.

"The project will spur socio-economic growth in specific areas and bring great benefit to the people in the East Coast," Najib said Friday to Malaysian journalists covering his visit to China since Monday.

The Prime Minister said it was not a mega project for prestige but designed to improve connectivity for the movement of goods and services and economic upliftment, and could be assumed to be part of China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative.

Najib said connectivity in Southeast Asia would become more meaningful with the implementation of the ECRL, to be undertaken with capital injection from China.

He also said that investments by China in Malaysia and by Malaysian companies in China would continue to grow. China has so far invested US\$2.5 billion (RM10.46 billion) in Malaysia while Malaysian companies have invested US\$7.5 billion (RM31.38 billion) in China.

The Prime Minister said his visit did not only take into account the interests of big businesses but also the oil palm smallholders and swiftlet breeders so that they could step up their exports to China.

In terms of a comprehensive and strategic partnership, he said, emphasis was given to defence with the purchase of four littoral maritime ships as well as improved cooperation in the defence field, counter terrorism and operating a counter-messaging centre.

Najib said cooperation between the two countries was now more meaningful and comprehensive.

He said he wanted those involved in all the decisions arrived at to undertake implementation without any delay and without giving rise to any doubts about Malaysia's commitment.

The Prime Minister assigned his special envoy to China, Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting, to represent him in ensuring that all the projects were implemented as soon as possible.

He emphasised the capability of China in implementing any project speedily, saying that speed in execution gave confidence to all quarters.

◆xecution is important because it required the commitment of all quarters to ensure that the approved projects were implemented within the specified time, he said.

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