

I Make No Apologies For Wanting To Build World-Class Infrastructure - Najib

KUALA LUMPUR, May 13 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak says he makes no apologies for wanting to build world-class infrastructure for Malaysia despite criticism from the opposition politicians.

Pointing out that some opposition politicians had said the government was selling the country's sovereignty by agreeing to develop some projects with China, Najib stressed that such projects open up huge swathes of the country.

He said with local ownership being preserved, the infrastructure would bring more trade and opportunity to the people, thousands of new jobs, improved living standards and prosperity.

"In the days of the old Silk Road, those who had wisdom knew that open minds, and borders open to trade, do not compromise sovereignty, but are in the interests of all countries.

"The same is true today, and we welcome investment from all our friends and partners, just as Malaysia, as a seafaring, outward looking nation, proud of its diversity, moderation and tolerance, has always traded with and invested in countries around the world, including China."

The prime minister said this in his article entitled 'Why Malaysia supports China's Belt and Road' which was published by the South China Morning Post newspaper on Friday.

In the article, he highlighted about his last visit to China which agreements and understandings amounting to RM144 billion had been signed, adding it was a sign of the great confidence that the Chinese investors have in Malaysia.

Najib said although his visit was only a very short time ago, but the results have already been seen, for example the launch of the world's first "Digital Free Trade Zone" in Kuala Lumpur.

"The littoral mission ships we agreed to buy from China, meanwhile, will provide jobs in both Malaysia and China -- as the first two ships are being built in each country -- as well as knowledge transfer to Malaysia, and help safeguard the safety and security of all Malaysians.

"That is truly an example of win-win cooperation, and if it is on that basis that the belt and road initiative continues to develop, we should all welcome it.

"We should all contribute to and participate in it. And we should all wish it every success," he said.

Meanwhile, Najib who is on a five-day working visit to China to attend the Belt and Road Forum for international cooperation said the forum has an emphasis on mutual discussion, mutual construction and mutual sharing.

"This is greatly welcomed, and I am confident that the agreements many of the participants, including Malaysia, will be signing will set the country on a strong footing for the next phase of this remarkable plan.

He said the win-win cooperation could be seen in ASEAN when the group considered just some of the game-changing infrastructure project resulting from the Belt and Road Initiative.

"For example, the China-Laos railway; the Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway; the Nakhon Ratchasima-Bangkok high-speed railway; and, for us in Malaysia, the East Coast Rail Link," he said.

Najib explained that the rail line would drive connectivity and economic growth for Malaysia's underdeveloped east coast, and act as a land-bridge enabling cost- and time-efficient transport of goods between Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

"For, as Asia continues to rise and take a greater place on the world stage, this model will ensure we do so as friends to all, helping those who have been left behind in our own countries and other parts of the world, and open to friends and partners from across the continents.

"This is the Asian Century, so let us ensure that it is marked not by the strife, wars and enmity of past centuries. Let us instead be true to our values of mutual respect, peace, harmony, and non-interference in the affairs of sovereign states.

"Let us forge ahead with the building of new trade routes that diminishes none, but serve to increase the prosperity of all humanity," he said.

--BERNAMA

© 2017 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. [Disclaimer](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Security Policy](#)

Source <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1355569>

