

Malaysia And China Are Trusted Friends - Najib

From Datuk Mokhtar Hussain

BEIJING, May 13 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak held a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People, here Saturday.

Najib, on a five-day working visit to China, will also attend the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation on May 14 and 15.

The 'One Belt One Road' is an initiative by Xi to boost trade between countries by providing infrastructure such as ports, railways and highways.

Najib will then join Xi for bilateral talks to discuss economic cooperation between Malaysia and China.

Also present in the delegation are the Prime Minister's Special Envoy to China, Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Rahman Dahlan, Trade and Industry Minister II Datuk Seri Ong Ka Chuan and Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek

In his remarks, Najib said he believed the 'One Belt One Road' Initiative was a game changer for the entire region, stretching to Europe and Africa.

He added that since they met last November, a lot of initiatives that were agreed upon by both countries had been implemented or were about to be implemented.

"I agree with you (President Xi) that Malaysia and China are not only neighbours but are trusted friends," Najib said.

The Prime Minister said that although bilateral relations between Malaysia and China was at the highest level, there was scope to deepen and enhance it further.

The Prime Minister later met Chinese Premier Li Keqiang before joining the Malaysian delegation at the bilateral meeting with the Chinese government and both witnessed the signing of three memorandums of understanding involving the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry.

The three ministries were represented by their respective ministers.

The Transport Ministry will work with China's Ministry of Commerce to develop infrastructure such as railways, ports and airports for mutual benefit while MITI will cooperate with China's National Development and Reform Commission, among others for the mutual recognition of standards and information sharing as well as to encourage the utilisation of local supply chains and facilitate cross-border e-commerce.

China, for the next five years, is committed to import goods worth US\$2 trillion (RM8.6 trillion), investing up to US\$150 billion (RM645 billion) and offering 10,000 places for training and studies in China.

The agreement involving the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry was for the export of fresh pineapples to China.

Total trade between Malaysia and China grew by 20.3 per cent to US\$29.33 billion (RM126 billion) with imports worth US\$12.9 billion (RM55.47 billion) and exports worth US\$16.43 billion (RM70.64 billion).

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