

Mahathir holds talks with China's top leaders, consolidates China-Malaysia ties

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From Mohd Haikal Mohd Isa

BEIJING, April 25 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad Thursday held talks with China's top leaders, further underlining the strong bilateral relationship between the two countries.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived here Wednesday night, met President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Keqiang and Li Zhanshu, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

The 94-year-old Malaysian leader, who is here on a five-day working visit and to attend the 2nd Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, met Xi at the Great Hall of the People.

He also led a Malaysian delegation in a bilateral meeting with Xi.

The forum on China's Belt and Road Initiative, which is expected to draw about 40 global leaders and hundreds of representatives, will be opened by the Chinese president on Friday.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir held a bilateral meeting with Premier Li at the Diaoyutai (State Guest House) here.

Also present during the bilateral meetings with Xi and Li were several Malaysian ministers including Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah; Economic Affairs Minister Datuk

Mohamed Azmin Ali; Transport Minister Anthony Loke; Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Salahuddin Ayub; International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Darell Leiking and Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin.

After the meeting, Dr Mahathir and Li witnessed the signing of two memorandums of understanding on enhancing cooperation in the palm oil sector between Malaysia and China as well as on the development of industrial parks and logistics hubs pursuant to the RM44-billion East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project in Peninsular Malaysia.

An agreement on the reinstatement of the Bandar Malaysia project was also signed.

Later, Dr Mahathir held a bilateral meeting with Zhanshu and his delegation.

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