

**By : DATO' SRI MOHD NAJIB BIN TUN HAJI ABDUL RAZAK  
PERDANA MENTERI MALAYSIA**

**Venue : Sepang, Selangor**

**Date : 03/07/2014**

**Title : THE GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY OF XIAMEN UNIVERSITY  
MALAYSIA CAMPUS SITE**

Bismillahirrahmannirrahim.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Good Morning and Salam 1 Malaysia.

**Your Excellency Mr Chen Shun;**

Assistant Minister of Education of the People's Republic of China,

**Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Idris Jusoh;**

Second Minister of Education Malaysia,

**Professor Zhu Chongshi;**

President of Xiamen University,

**Your Excellency,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. I am delighted to be here for the ground breaking ceremony of the Xiamen University Malaysia Campus. I would like to express my appreciation to the organising committee for making this occasion possible and for giving me the honour to launch this historic event.
2. Firstly, I wish to express my appreciation to the President of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Xi Jinping, Premier His Excellency Li Keqiang, the Ministry of Education of China and the Ministry of Education of Malaysia and all other government relevant agencies involved in making this day possible.
3. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting (Special Envoy to China), Dato' Dr. Hou Kok Chung (Former Deputy Minister of Higher Education), Datuk Ter Leong Yap (Executive Chairman of Sunsuria Berhad), land owner Sime Darby, Mr Robert Kuok and all the other generous donors. Without your contributions, we would not be here to witness the start of this important project.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. It is fitting that Xiamen University has chosen Malaysia as the country in which to establish its first international campus. Xiamen University has deep historical ties here. The University was founded in 1921 by Mr. Tan Kah Kee, a man known as the "Henry Ford of Malaya". An entrepreneur, philanthropist and educationalist, he was a famous rubber magnate who made his fortune in Malaya. Education was dear to his heart – and now

more than 90 years after its founding, Xiamen University is branching out to Malaysia. If Tan Kah Kee were alive today, I am sure he would be very proud.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. The government is committed to making Malaysia a hub for world class education. Already Malaysia is ranked 11th in UNESCO's list of preferred educational destinations. We intend to improve this ranking. We are also committed to developing a home-grown workforce of individuals capable of generating big new ideas and game changing strategies that will create wealth and jobs for our people. In order to achieve both these goals, Malaysia must improve the range and quality of our tertiary education. Xiamen University's new campus will certainly help us to –achieve this.
  
6. Xiamen is a prestigious, internationally recognized university. Having a branch here in Malaysia will not only attract high-quality students from abroad, but will provide more choice for Malaysian students. Not everyone can study abroad – but now Malaysian students will be able to undertake a global education at a reasonable cost, right here in Malaysia.
  
7. The Xiamen University Malaysia Campus will cover 150 acres and house some 10,000 students. Five academic buildings, six student residences, activity centres and sporting facilities are scheduled to be completed by September next year. And I know this is a rather tight time line to achieve and the Malaysian government will give her fullest support in order for the University to achieve its completion date.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. In February 2013, a Memorandum of Arrangement was signed between Xiamen University and Sunsuria Development to establish a Malaysia Campus. And in October 2013, President Xi Jinping and I witnessed the signing ceremony by the China Development Bank to provide the investment and financing for the campus. Xiamen University's decision to open in Malaysia would not have been possible without the very strong ties between Malaysia and China.
  
9. The bonds between our two countries are strengthening. In May, I visited Beijing to commemorate the 40th anniversary of our diplomatic relations between our nations. Four decades ago, my father set out on what he called a 'journey of goodwill, to sow the seeds of mutual understanding and trust'. While I was in China, my counterpart and I signed a joint communique at the same venue 40 years ago further broadening and deepening cooperation in all areas of mutual benefit, including education. It was a highly memorable and successful visit.
  
10. Other examples of the growing cooperation between our countries include the China Malaysia Qinzhou Industrial Park in Guangxi and the Malaysia China Kuantan Industrial Park in Kuantan; and of course the recent arrival of the giant pandas Fu Wa and Feng Yi who now have their Malaysian names: Xing Xing and Liang Liang.
  
11. This year is Malaysia-China friendship year. It has seen an increased commitment to broadening and deepening cooperation between Malaysia and China. This ground-breaking ceremony is symbolic of the friendship between our two nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. The 21st century will likely to be Asia's century. China aspires to be the largest economy in the world; while Malaysia aims to be a fully developed nation by 2020. We need peace, stability and prosperity in our region if we want to achieve our respective goals. Deepening and strengthening our people-to-people relations will help us to achieve this.
  
13. It will not be long until a diverse student body – composed of young people from China, Malaysia and the ASEAN nations – will be housed and educated here. Graduating classes will leave this campus with mutual understanding and respect; gained from living and studying together at this university. The sense of community created here will ensure peace and friendship between our countries for years to come.
  
14. On that note, I am delighted to officiate the Ground Breaking Ceremony for the Xiamen University Malaysia Campus.

Thank you.

Wabilahitaufiq Walhidayah Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.