

《马来总理：中国是东盟积极的合作伙伴》

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KUALA LUMPUR, May 24 (Xinhua) -- China has long been considered ASEAN's most active partner and this trend looks certain to continue, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak said on Saturday.

In 2010, ASEAN and China signed a five-year Plan of Action (2011-2015) to implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity. Under this plan, close to 200 projects have been undertaken for 2012-2013 alone, Najib said in an exclusive interview with Xinhua.

The implemented activities cover various areas - from agriculture to small and medium-sized enterprises to media cooperation.

People-to-people contacts are also rising significantly, with the increase in the exchange of students between ASEAN and China, the prime minister said.

The ASEAN-China free trade area is also the biggest in the world, he added.

Last year, ASEAN and China celebrated the 10th anniversary of strategic partnership. Many bold proposals were laid out to strengthen ASEAN-China relations.

"Malaysia is encouraged with the strong commitment to ASEAN shown by the new Chinese administration and is supportive of many of the proposals. In this regard, Malaysia looks forward to closer ASEAN-China relations," he said.

"Malaysia becomes chair of ASEAN in 2015 the same year ASEAN is set to become an ASEAN Community. In this regard, China has played a pivotal role in ASEAN's connectivity as well as efforts in narrowing the development gap in the region.

"ASEAN appreciates China's sincere efforts in this endeavor and hopes China will continue to be supportive of ASEAN," Najib said.

"Malaysia believes China will be a strong partner of ASEAN in 2015 and the years to come," he added.

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