



Malaysia is China's No. 1 trading partner in Southeast Asia and a big investment and tourism destination. Next Thursday in Pudong, Malaysia's trade minister will discuss business opportunities.

Malaysia-China ties expand

Hu Xiaocen

The ties between China and Malaysia grow tighter as economic activities boom. Next year will be the Malaysia-China Friendship Year to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Bilateral trade grew by 15.7 percent year to year to US\$50.9 billion in the first half of this year, according to China's General Administration of Customs.

China's imports from Malaysia rose from US\$27.7 billion in the first half of 2012 to US\$28.7 billion for the same period this year. Exports to Malaysia increased 36 percent year on year to US\$22.2 billion in the first six months.

Malaysia has the third-largest economy in Southeast Asia, and it's China's top trade partner in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Electrical machinery was the majority of China's imports from Malaysia in the first half, accounting for 61 percent of the total. The top three products China exported to Malaysia during the same period were electrical machinery, other machinery, and

furniture and bedding, accounting for 18, 12 and 7 percent respectively, according to China Customs.

Trade between Shanghai and Malaysia played a large role in bilateral national trade. The value reached US\$12.1 billion in the first six months, almost a quarter of bilateral trade between the two countries.

At the Consulate General of Malaysia in Shanghai's Malaysian Trade and Investment Center, Trade Consul Mansor Shah Wahid told Shanghai Daily that he's optimistic about the prospects of trade between Shanghai and Malaysia.

"Shanghai is becoming an international trade center, which will help realize its ambition of becoming a global financial hub," he said in an interview last week.

"The city has become a global procurement center and a number of multinational companies are setting up procurement centers in Shanghai. Through this gateway we are able to promote our products and services from Malaysia," he added.

The State Council, China's cabinet, recently approved the trial in Shanghai of a first-of-its-kind free trade zone on China's mainland. The Ministry of Commerce said the experimental

project aims to "explore a new path and a new mode of opening up to the outside world."

"There are many models of free trade zones in the world.

Taking Jebel Ali Free Zone in Dubai as an example, foreign companies set up operations there and distribute to northern Africa and Central Asia. China can also play that role," Mansor said.

One of the best economic records

"We are engaging with international procurement centers in Shanghai that are responsible for making sourcing decisions within Asia for multinationals," he continued. "So our office here could leverage that to distribute Malaysian products and services to global markets, including the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia. We also have offices in Beijing, Guangzhou and Chengdu doing similar work, because China is very important to us."

Malaysia has had one of the best economic records in Asia, with GDP growing an average 6.5 percent since it gained independence in 1957. The country has entered a new phase of development that aims to expand economic growth from the more de-

veloped west coast region, the capital city Kuala Lumpur and federal government's seat Putrajaya, to other economic zones.

These include the Northern Corridor that focuses on modern agriculture, manufacturing and design; the East Coast Economic Region that prioritizes tourism, oil and gas, and manufacturing; Iskandar Malaysia, formerly known as the Iskandar Development Region, focusing on financial services, and electrical and electronics services; the Sarawak Corridor for resource-based industry; and Sabah for agriculture-based industry and tourism.

Trade Consul Mansor said the process is similar to China's urbanization that is on a much bigger scale.

His office facilitates Malaysian investments in Chinese markets, including commercial properties, pharmaceuticals, auto dealerships and distribution, and water treatment.

The Consulate General of Malaysia in Shanghai will hold a seminar next Thursday in Pudong's Lujiazui area, where Minister of International Trade and Industry, Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, will discuss trade and investment opportunities in Malaysia.

Malaysian COC head sees big potential



Our goal is to establish partnership with local government authorities and associations to improve the platform for our members.

Lee Yik Choong

Chairman of the Shanghai chapter of MAYCHAM China

Hu Xiaocen

It's been almost two decades since the Beijing-based Malaysian community set up an informal association to facilitate business and networking for Malaysian people in China.

After formation of the Malaysian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, or MAYCHAM China, the Shanghai office opened in 2006 to assist the Malaysian business community in China's eastern coastal area.

Lee Yik Choong, chairman of the Shanghai chapter of MAYCHAM China, is also the president and managing director of a locally incorporated service provider for semiconductor packaging and testing called STATS ChipPAC China Ltd.

He tells Shanghai Daily that most of his co-workers at the chamber are also active business entrepreneurs and executives in their communities.

In January, Lee became chairman of the chamber, a two-year term. He previously served as vice chairman.

Prior to STATS ChipPAC, Lee held various senior management positions at Intel Corp, including general manager of Intel's CPU assembly and test factory in Chengdu, capital city of Sichuan Province. He started the first Intel CPU factory

in Shanghai back in 2002.

During an interview last week with Shanghai Daily, Lee shared the MAYCHAM China's vision that diversity will generate great opportunities and new scope for Malaysian and Chinese business.

Q: Starting from 2006, MAYCHAM Shanghai supported Malaysian businesses not only in Shanghai but also in neighboring provinces such as Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui.

A: Yes, we have around 300 members, including 80-plus corporate members and 200-plus individual members. Membership includes companies and people from all walks of life, such as food, retail, trading, tourism, property development and construction. Membership is not limited to Malaysians.

Q: How does the chamber facilitate networking among Malaysian businesses in China?

A: We are a non-profit organization. Our mainstream income is through membership. Our goal is to establish partnership with local government authorities and associations to improve the platform and benefits for our members.

We also aim to become the partner of companies and organizations that can leverage our network for their own benefits. They can

obtain some constant income and sustainable growth through our network.

We have a lunch gathering every week, where people can look for business opportunities and share experience with others.

Q: How does the chamber promote bilateral trade?

A: Our goal is to strengthen the ties between the two countries. Policy relaxation will help the business associations of the two countries. So there are growing opportunities for both sides.

We cooperate with the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation under the Consulate General of Malaysia, which is known as MATRADE, to promote Malaysian products, services in China, as well as investment in Shanghai.

Q: How can stronger ties promote mutual growth?

A: China is on track to globalize its business operations, while Malaysia is one of the most important destinations in Asia. Of course China is a much bigger market than Malaysia.

So doing business with China helps Malaysian companies become global. Parkson Retail is a great example. It is the biggest operator of department stores on China's mainland.

Welcoming more tourists from China key goal

THE Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) 2014 promotional campaign was kicked off in 2013 by the Prime Minister, the Honorable Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak in January. It officially began a series of year-long special events and activities leading up to VMY 2014, with the theme "Celebrating Malaysia Truly Asia."

The official launch of the intensive tourism campaign is set to promote the country internationally and highlight various pro-active initiatives by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and Tourism Malaysia.

There are numerous reasons tourists find Malaysia a must-visit holiday destination. While some are there to experience the country's marvelous natural wonders and impeccable warm hospitality, others simply enjoy the shopping and urban experiences.

Whether it's the rich and colorful multicultural heritage, delectable cuisines, great mountains and rivers, lush green parks and gardens, idyllic tropical islands, palm-fringed beaches or million-year-old rainforests — you can find all these attractions in Malaysia ... Truly Asia!

Currently the second-largest foreign exchange earner for Malaysia, tourism continues to be a critical economic sector for the country, providing significant potential for growth and development.

Malaysia's tourist arrivals continue to grow every year. Last year was no exception. The country welcomed 25 million foreign tourists, placing it as the 10th most popular tourism destination in the world, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization.

In terms of international tourism

receipts, the country was ranked 13th, registering RM60.6 billion (US\$18.29 billion).

China is the leading tourist source market outside the ASEAN region for Malaysia. Last year, China was ranked third among the top 10 tourist generating markets to Malaysia, with 1.56 million tourists, signifying a 24.6 percent growth compared to the previous year.

Indeed, Tourism Malaysia's promotional efforts in China have always been extensive and aggressive. This is not a surprise as the relationship between China and Malaysia has grown from strength to strength over the years and today, both countries have become close friends and partners engaging in tourism, trade and commerce, and learning from each other in various fields.

With the celebration of the Visit Malaysia Year in 2014, Malaysia aims to boost arrivals from China and the rest of the world. It is all about bringing Malaysia to the world and bringing the world to Malaysia.

VMY 2014 will also help to ensure that Malaysia meets its target of achieving 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in receipts by the year 2020, based on the Malaysia Tourism Transformation Plan.

To achieve its goal, Malaysia is targeting high net-worth tourists. The country has rolled out various innovative and creative events and activities, as well as luxury experiences to diversify its tourism attractions. They include spa and wellness vacations, golfing holidays, weddings and honeymoons, duty-free shopping sprees and helicopter tours.



To cater to affluent and discerning travelers, Malaysia continues to welcome the arrival of many new high-end hotels and resorts.

Nevertheless, a luxury holiday in Malaysia goes beyond world-class hotels and resorts. Many people would agree that luxurious holidays wouldn't be complete without indulging in a high-end luxury-shopping spree. Malaysia certainly has much to offer when it comes to shopping. Besides local brands, many famous international brands have also chosen to be represented in the country.

It is not a surprise that shopping

was the second-highest tourist expenditure for Malaysia last year, after accommodations. Tourist expenditure on shopping increased by 6.3 percent to the tune of RM18.6 billion compared to 2011. It constituted about 30.7 percent of Malaysia's total receipts of RM60.6 billion. In 2000, when the inaugural Malaysia Mega Sale Carnival was launched, shopping only constituted 23.1 percent of the country's total tourist expenditures.

The arrival of Southeast Asia's first premium outlet center in Malaysia in December 2011 has also solidified the country's position as a preferred destination to visit, shop, dine and relax. The Johor Premium Outlets features more than 80 designer and name-brand stores, offering impressive factory direct savings of 25 percent to 65 percent every day.

In addition, Malaysia's three major sale events, the Malaysia Grand Prix Sale (March to April), the Malaysia Mega Sale Carnival (June to September), and the Malaysia Year-End Sale (November to January), organized by Tourism Malaysia annually, are also highly anticipated not only by local shopaholics but also those from around the region.

To further boost tourist shopping expenditures, the Malaysian government has intensified efforts to position the country as a duty-free shopping destination. Beginning January 1, 2011, import duties have been abolished, making imported goods (except cars, glassware, cigarettes, alcohol and chocolates) that are not subject to Customs duties readily available all over the country and not limited to duty-free zones.

Malaysia at a glance

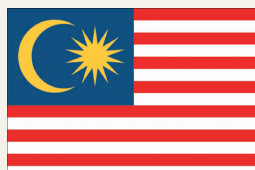
Facts

Full name:
Malaysia

Capital:
Kuala Lumpur

Seat of government:
Putrajaya

National flag:



Coat of arms:



National day:
Independence Day:
August 31
Malaysia Day:
September 16

Area:
329,847 sq km

Population:
29.2 million

Major language:
Malaysian, English

Major religion:
Muslim

Head of state:
King Tuanku Abdul
Halim Mu'adzam Shah



Prime minister:
Najib Razak



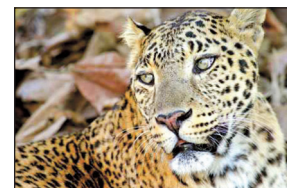
Type of state:
Constitutional monarchy

Monetary unit:
ringgits (MYR)



Do you know?

Malaysia is home to 600 species of birds, 200 species of mammals, 140 species of snakes and 60 species of lizards. They have over 14,500 species of flowering plants and trees. The largest flower in the world is Rafflesia which is found only in Sabah.



CELEBRATING THE 50TH YEAR OF MALAYSIA'S FORMATION.

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Located on the South China Sea, Malaysia is a country separated by two shorelines. In conjunction with Malaysia's 50th anniversary, we are introducing the 1 Malaysia 1 Great Fare offer. Come and join us for the celebration as you feast your eyes on the natural beauty of the land and experience our multiracial culture.

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Fare sale on Malaysia's 50th

FIFTY years ago, Malaysia was formed, uniting different races such as Malays, Chinese, Indian, Kadazan and Iban under one harmonious multiracial and multicultural society.

It has gone from a poor region to a prosperous developing country. With its tropical rainforest climate, days typically are hot. However, after sunset, it becomes cooler and windy.

With its renowned hospitality, delicious food and rich culture, music and dance, Malaysia leaves tourists with a lasting impression.

Malaysia's association with China began during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).

The Chinese emperor sent mariner Zheng He to Southeast Asia, where he landed on the shores of Malacca laden with silks and ceramics in the early 15th century.

The flag carrier, Malaysia Airlines, flies to seven destinations in China, and provides 99 direct flights to Kuala Lumpur and Kota Kinabalu, with further connections in Malaysia.

Rich in culture and nature

Malaysia is a country blessed with abundance of nature, blanketed by lush green forests. Here you'll find many resorts and historical destinations, rare animals, long houses, fortresses and castles, as well as mosques and Chinese and Indian temples.

For those who love water sports, amazing beaches and islands beckon with adventure activities such as surfing, diving and snorkeling. Langkawi, Penang and Pangkor

on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia, and Redang on the east coast, are just some of the sun-drenched beach paradises to which tourists flock.

But the jewel in the crown is Sipadan island in Sabah, renowned as one of the most beautiful islands in the world, with crystal clear waters and abundant marine life.

A dazzling array of cuisines from Oriental to Western abound, featuring popular fare such as dim sum, *assam laksa*, *roti canai*, *teh tarik*, *satay* and *nasi lemak*.

Promotions

Shopping in Malaysia is also popular and ranks among the best in the region. Choose from the surroundings of shopping malls filled with luxury labels and premium goods to street markets selling locally produced crafts such as pewter and batik.

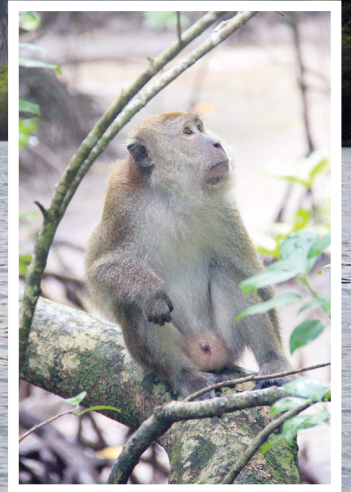
In conjunction with the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's formation and the Visit Malaysia 2014 campaign, Malaysia Airlines has come up with an irresistible offer.

The promotional sales period is from August 21 to September 11. All-inclusive economy class fares start from as low as 2,350 yuan (US\$384) while business class fares are as low as 4,650 yuan.

The travel period is from August 24 to September 24 and October 7 to October 31.

Besides that, Malaysia Airlines allows for an extra 10kg for all checked baggage, so you can bring back souvenirs back home.

Visit malaysiaairlines.com for more detail.



Langkawi has a large stretch of rainforest in its northwest where you can begin a jungle adventure or stroll in a secret garden. — Photos by Zhao Wen

Zhao Wen

Whether you're looking for adventure or a beautiful place in the sun, Malaysia is the destination where you can have it all on a reasonable budget.

Malaysia is filled with places to explore and plenty of surprises. It's known for tropical scenery, wildlife and idyllic islands containing natural wonders.

Langkawi is one of those special islands. The duty-free isle is a UNESCO Global Geopark because of its 550 million years of geology, 99 limestone rocks and islands, many in extraordinary shapes.

In classic Malay literature, Langkawi is depicted as the resting place of Garuda, the mythical bird ridden by the god Vishnu. Beyond the crystal aquamarine waters and pristine beaches are tropical rainforests filled with flora and fauna, some very rare.

Eagle watching

The name Langkawi comes from the words "helang" meaning eagle and "kawi" meaning strong in ancient Malay. Therefore eagle-spotting is a must. The best way is to take a boat along the mangrove forest in the northeastern part of the island. There eagles hover above the water, as low as 10 meters, then suddenly dive in to catch fish.

Tourists are warned not to spoil eagles by feeding them since eagles are solitary birds and feeding has already altered the natural habits of some eagles.

Cave of bats

Langkawi has a vast number of limestone caves that are home to fruit bats, birds, insects and invertebrates. Some caves are archaeological sites, while some are used to harvest edible birds' nests that

are made into valuable tonics.

The cave of bats is near the eagle watching site. Remember to take a flashlight to see the legions of bats hanging upside down. The numbers are countless.

Remember to wear a hat because the bats might dump guano on your head if they feel disturbed.

At dusk, the bats swarm out to feed on fruit and insects. If you look carefully, you might see a snake waiting to lunge at a bat, which is famously "blind."

Tropical rainforest

Langkawi is a paradise for hikers. It has a large stretch of rainforest in its northwest where you can begin a jungle adventure or stroll in a secret garden. If you cannot find a local guide, you can spend a night at the Datai Hotel in the rainforest. It has many different rooms, suites and cottages, including some on a creek. At night you can hear a symphony of insects and frogs.

Theme parks for children

Apart from natural beauty and islands, Malaysia has theme parks, including LEGOLAND Malaysia and Hello Kitty Town in Johor, Nusejaya, near Singapore. LEGOLAND is the first of its kind in Asia.

Opened last year, it contains miniature replicas of Asia's popular landmarks, including the Summer Palace in Beijing, the Taj Mahal in India and Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

Nearby is Sanrio Hello Kitty Town, the first Hello Kitty theme park outside of Japan. There are Hello Kitty attractions, rides and interactive games.

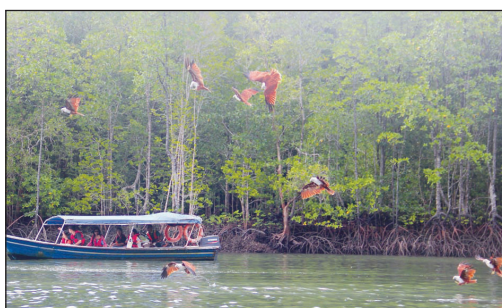
Girls can dress up, decorate their nails and make jewelry, cookies and get a Hello Kitty Doll at Hello Kitty's Wish Studio.



LEGOLAND, the first of its kind in Asia, contains miniature replicas of Asia's popular landmarks, such as the Summer Palace in Beijing and the Taj Mahal in India.



Malaysia Airlines promises quality service and entertainment facilities onboard.



Eagle spotting is a must in Langkawi.

If you go



How to get to Langkawi and Johor:

Malaysia Airlines flies direct from Kuala Lumpur to Langkawi and Johor. Baggage allowance 30kg, so there's no need to worry about buying too much on the duty-free island and buying children's toys.

Where to stay:

In Langkawi, the Datai Hotel in the rainforest.

In Johor: Traders Hotel, next door to Hello Kitty Town and 10 minutes' drive from LEGOLAND Malaysia.

Hello Kitty entrance fee: MYR75 (US\$23)

LEGOLAND Malaysia one-day tickets: MYR110 for children 3-11, seniors over 60, MYR140 for children 12 and older and adults under 59.