

Japan's former PM Shinzo Abe on special visit to Malaysia

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(FILE) Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe answers questions during a budget committee session of the House of Councilors at the Parliament in Tokyo on March 24, 2017. AFPPIX

PUTRAJAYA: Former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe is on a special visit to Malaysia from March 10 to 12 in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of Malaysia's Look East Policy (LEP) and the 65th anniversary of Malaysia-Japan relations.

During the special visit, Abe, who is also the special envoy of Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, is scheduled to meet the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah on March 11 at Istana Negara, according to a Foreign Ministry statement, today.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob is also scheduled to receive a courtesy call from Abe and will host the latter to a dinner on March 11.

According to the statement, apart from discussing post-Covid-19 new cooperation initiatives between Malaysia and Japan, Abe will also deliver a special message from Kishida to Ismail Sabri.

Abe will also be conferred with an Honorary Doctorate in Political Economics in conjunction with the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM)'s 36th Convocation Ceremony on March 12, which will be graced by the presence of Al-Sultan Abdullah.

"Abe's special visit reflects the closeness and close cooperation in various fields between Malaysia and Japan.

"The implementation of the LEP for four decades has yielded great benefits, especially in aspects of human capital development as well as trade and investment between the two countries," the statement added.

In 2021, Japan was Malaysia's fourth largest trading partner with a bilateral trade value of RM149 billion (US\$36 billion).

As of December 2021, Japan was the largest investor based on the number of projects implemented in the manufacturing sector with a total value of RM90.9 billion (US\$27.6 billion). - Bernama