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EGYPT

FROM AHMAD REJAL ARBEE 84 P

CAIRO, DEC 13 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA AND EGYPT HAVE AGREED TO STEP UP RELATIONS IN VARIOUS FIELDS, INCLUDING EDUCATION, TRADE AND INVESTMENT AS WELL AS TOURISM.

THIS FOLLOWS TALKS HELD SEPARATELY HERE YESTERDAY BETWEEN MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD AND EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT HOSNI MOBARAK AND PRIME MINISTER KAMAL HASSANALY AND OFFICIALS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR TOLD NEWSMEN LATER THAT THERE WAS ALSO SCOPE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

THE MALAYSIAN AIRLINE SYSTEM (MAS) AND EGYPT AIR WOULD BE ASKED TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING FLIGHTS BETWEEN KUALALUMPUR AND CAIRO TO FACILITATE AIR TRAVEL BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HAD A FULL DAY'S PROGRAMME YESTERDAY -- THE SECOND DAY OF HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO EGYPT, WHICH INCLUDED A 45-MINUTE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT MOBARAK AT THE QUABAH PALACE HERE.

PRESENT AT THE MEETING WERE MALAYSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TENGKU AHMAD RITHAUDDEEN AND AGRICULTURE MINISTER ENCIK ANWARIBRAHIM.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MEMBERS OF HIS DELEGATION LATER HELD NEARLY TWO HOURS OF TALKS WITH EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS HEADED BY ENCIK ALY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID EGYPT HAD ALSO AGREED TO CO-SPONSOR THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY IN KUALA LUMPUR, MAKING IT THE SECOND ARAB STATE AFTER LIBYA TO DO SO.

OTHER COUNTRIES THAT HAVE CO-SPONSORED THE UNIVERSITY INCLUDE PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH AND THE MALDIVES.

HE SAID 'BOTH SIDES HAD REACHED FULL AGREEMENT IN MOST AREAS AND THE RELATIONSHIP WOULD BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED. THIS INCLUDED STEPPING UP ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS RELATIONS.'

OFFICIALS TOLD BERNAMA THAT MALAYSIA HAD REQUESTED FOR MORE PLACES, ESPECIALLY IN THE FIELDS OF MEDICINE AND ENGINEERING, FOR ITS STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITIES HERE.

NEARLY 1,000 MALAYSIANS ARE STUDYING AT VARIOUS UNIVERSITIES HERE, MANY OF THEM AT THE AL-AZHAR UNIVERSITY.

THE MEETING ALSO DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF EXCHANGE OF LECTURERS AND AGRICULTURAL EXPERTS AS WELL AS THE SETTING UP OF JOINT VENTURES.

ADDRESSING EGYPTIAN BUSINESSMEN OVER LUNCH AT A HOTEL HERE, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THERE WAS A LOT OF SCOPE FOR MALAYSIAN AND EGYPTIAN BUSINESSMEN TO GET TOGETHER TO PROMOTE TRADE AND INVESTMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

HE SAID MALAYSIA WAS QUITE HAPPY TO INVEST IN EGYPT, AND THAT MALAYSIA WAS ALSO A GOOD PLACE TO INVEST AND WOULD WELCOME EGYPTIAN INVESTMENT.

HE SAID THAT MALAYSIA, WHERE EVER SINCE INDEPENDENCE THE SAME PARTY HAD BEEN ELECTED INTO POWER AND HAD FOLLOWED A CONSISTENT POLICY, OFFERED POLITICAL STABILITY.

MALAYSIA ALSO DID NOT HAVE A SWCESSION PROBLEM, HE SAID. ITS LEADERS HAD RETIRED GRACEFULLY WHEN THEIR TIME CAME.

+I HOPE TO DO THE SAME WHEN MY TIME COMES,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO SAID THAT MALAYSIA, EVER SINCE INDEPENDENCE, HAD ENCOURAGED BUSINESS ACTIVITIES AND INVESTMENTS BY FOLLOWING A POLICY OF FREE ENTERPRISE.

+WE NEVER ATTEMPTED TO NATIONALISE BUT WE DO ACQUIRE FOREIGN COMPANIES OPERATING IN MALAYSIA THROUGH PURCHASE OF THEIR SHARES IN THE OPEN MARKET,+ HE SAID.

AS A RESULT, MALAYSIA NOW HAD A NUMBER OF ITS OWN MULTINATIONALS LIKE SIMEDARBY, GUTHRIE, HIGHLANDS AND LOWLANDS AND BOUSTEAD.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT MALAYSIA BOUGHT THOSE COMPANIES BECAUSE IT WANTED TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE WORLD,

HE INVITED THE BUSINESSMEN TO VISIT MALAYSIA AND LOOK AT THE INVESTMENT AND TRADE OPPORTUNITIES THERE AND SAID HE LOOKED FOWARD TO THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MALAYSIA.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR YESTERDAY MORNING LAID WREATHS AT THE TOMS OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER AND THAT OF THE LATE EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWARSADAT IN NASR CITY HERE.

HE LATER VISITED AL-AZHAR AND HAD TALKS WITH THE SHEIKH OF AL-AZHAR, GAD EL HAK ALI GAD EL HAK. -- MORE

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LAST NIGHT: HE WAS FETED TO A DINNER 5Y THE MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR HERE, ENCIK ABDULLAH ZAWAWI MOHAMAD, AT HIS RESIDENCE IN MEDINET AL MOHANDISEEN.

THE PRIME MINISTER IS DUE TO VISIT THE RESTORED TEMPLE OF ABU SIMBEL AT LUXOR IN SOUTHERN EGYPT TODAY. -- BERNAMA

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