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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 4 (Bernama) -- Malaysia views with a sense of reassurance the rapprochement taking place in the northern area -********X**
****W**$¼*********R*╥+*╥ò╓*à╥╓¡*Mò╓Ñ Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

This rapprochement, he said, was seen to dovetail with developments in Southeast Asia where ASEAN countries had built a measure of stability over a period of twenty years.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said this in a speech at the official dinner in honour of his visiting North Korean counterpart Yon Hyong Muk at Sri Perdana here.

+With your fraternal neighbour, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continue to hold constructive dialogue at the highest levels,+ Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

+We note too that the larger states around the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have already established a new understanding with both the Koreas based on closer economic cooperation and assistance,+ he added.-- More

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Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the security which ASEAN states worked for was based on improving the standard of living of their peoples through economic development and the concept of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality in the region.

He said ASEAN was committed to the concept of keeping Southeast Asia free of nuclear intrusion.

+When we reach a solution to the Cambodian problem, which we hope will be in the near future, our part of Asia will see genuine peace and political stability,+ he added.

He said there could be little prosperity anywhere without peace adding that even now blood was being shed in the Gulf war which had incurred countless of lives lost, massive damage and billions of dollars of precious fund.

+How much more worthwhile it is to live in peace and build our nations, small though they may be. We in Malaysia are committed to peace and peaceful solutions to the problems of international relations,+ he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said amidst changes taking place in the global economy, the time has come for developing countries to integrate into the regional and international trading and payment systems.

The North Korean premier, who arrived here today for a four-day visit, is heading a 28-member high level delegation. -- Bernama

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