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PM CALLS FOR GREATER COOPERATION WITH VIETNAM

Mahathir - Vietnam

(Embargo : For release at 10.30 pm today)

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KUALA LUMPUR Jan 20 (Bernama) -- ⁹² ~~Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad~~ today called on Vietnam to step up bilateral cooperation with Malaysia as the potentials have not been fully exploited.

The Prime Minister said the achievements in the cooperation between the two countries so far represented only a fraction of the vast potential.

+ There is no doubt that more could be done, and **must be** done, towards this end... and the most propitious time to do it is now,+ he said at a dinner in honour of Vietnamese Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet at Sri Perdana here tonight.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir gave an assurance that Malaysia would continue to give encouragement to efforts to step up cooperation with Vietnam.

He hoped that all the agreements signed between the two countries in the future would give more emphasis to economic cooperation.--more

▼20/01/21-05MST

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Mahathir - Vietnam 2 Kuala Lumpur (embargo)

He said Malaysia and Vietnam should study seriously the possibility of promoting direct trade, shipping, air links and other **areas** of economic relationship between them.

+ Malaysia would like to see the many facets of our bilateral relations, whether on-going or in the future, be predicated on a solid foundation of mutual trust and friendship between our peoples,+ he said.

The Prime Minister said to enhance **cooperation with** Vietnam, Malaysia had opened its Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City and encouraged its private sector and government agencies to involve themselves in the many opportunities for business that Vietnam offers.

He noted that since the past few years there had been encouraging progress in the relationship between the two **countries**.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also welcome the many positive changes that have been taking place in Vietnam since the country embarked on its renovation policy at the end of 1986.---Bernama

▼20/01/21-23MST

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Mahathir - Vietnam 3 (last) Kuala Lumpur (embargo)

He said Malaysia was prepared to share **its experiences** with Vietnam in the fields that it (Malaysia) had the expertise.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also touched on Malaysia's proposal for the setting up of the East Asia Economic **Caucus (EAEC)**.

He said EAEC was a consultative mechanism and not a trade bloc.

The Prime Minister said, greater cooperation among developing countries was necessary in facing the challenges ahead.

He said countries in the region should make coordinated and concerted efforts to expand economic relations among them.--Bernama

▼20/01/21-33MST