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MAHATHIR CONCLUDES SUCCESSFUL VIETNAM VISIT

Mahathir - visit

from Abdul Rahman Sulaiman

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HO CHI MINH CITY, April 23 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today described his five-day visit to Vietnam as successful and said he was satisfied with talks he had had with Vietnamese leaders. (B) over leg.

These would help step up bilateral relations in the years to come, he said.

Dr Mahathir, who concluded his official visit today, is scheduled to return to Kuala Lumpur tomorrow after having talks with his Vietnamese counterpart Vo Van Kiet and other leaders.

At a news conference for Malaysian journalists accompanying him, Dr Mahathir said that in several areas both countries had come to agreement on the specific measures that had to be taken to resolve problems.

+We agreed that any problem should be resolved through discussions,+ he said. -- more

▼23/04/18-48MST

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Mahathir - visit 2 Ho Chi Minh City

Yesterday, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi said both countries had set several principles on ways to develop the continental shelf covered by overlapping claims.

Abdullah had also said that Malaysia and Vietnam were agreed that military action in whatever form should be averted in seeking a solution to the issue of the Spratlys which were claimed by several countries including China.

Dr Mahathir said he had also discussed with Vietnamese leaders on the ways Malaysia could participate in redeveloping the Vietnamese economy which was recovering from the perils of war.

The Prime Minister, who brought along with him a 107-member business delegation, said both Vietnam and Malaysia had determined the sectors which could be participated in by the government and private sectors to help Vietnam redevelop.

Dr Mahathir said that in this connection he was happy that several companies in Malaysia had identified various joint ventures with Vietnamese agencies in specific projects. -- more

▼23/04/18-51MST

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Mahathir - visit 3 (last) Ho Chi Minh City

+In other words, we have achieved the objective of our visit here,+ he said.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived here yesterday after having been in the Vietnamese capital for three days, was last night entertained to dinner by the Chairman of the People's Committee of the city, Le Khao Binh, at the Reunification Palace.

This evening, he laid the foundation stone for the Equatorial Hotel in Tran Binh Trong in the heart of the city.

The international class hotel, to be put up at a cost of US\$25 million, is a joint venture among entrepreneurs in Vietnam and Malaysia and other Asean countries.

Fifty-one per cent of the equity is held by Hotel Equatorial (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd and Arab-Malaysian Development Bhd while the remainder is owned by Hoang Viet Company, Lim Kah Ngam (Investment) Pte Ltd and Natsteel Properties Pte Ltd.

In his speech, Dr Mahathir said the hotel project was a part of Malaysia's small contribution towards the redevelopment of Vietnam's war-ravaged economy. He said the project also symbolised the spirit and resourcefulness of Asean entrepreneurs in venturing overseas. -- Bernama

▼23/04/18-53MST