

CNS7407

U GE 08-12 00174 ED161'

aae

Mahathir - Laos

CONSIDERABLE SCOPE FOR ENHANCEMENT OF LAOS-MALAYSIA RELATIONS, SAYS PM

bm

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 8, (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight there is considerable scope for the enhancement of relations in various fields between Malaysia and Laos.

The Prime Minister said efforts towards this, end should begin now so as to strengthen bilateral co-operation in areas such as trade, investment and culture.

+I sincerely believe that there exists considerable scope for the enhancement of our bilateral relations,+ he said at a dinner held in hour of visiting Laostian Prime Minister Xhamtay Siphandone at Sri Perdana here.

He said the move by both countries to upgrade their diplomatic representation to the level of ambassadors resident in their respective capitals reflected their joint commitment towards fostering closer relations.

Following this, there had been an increasing number of Malaysians visiting Laos and some had been actively exploring the business and investment opportunities there, Dr Mahathir said. -- more

▼08/12/22-34MST

CNS7409

U GE 08-12 00135 ED162

a a e

Mahathir - Laos 2 Kuala Lumpur

Dr Mahathir hoped that, Laotians would likewise visit Malaysia to look at the various opportunities available in this country and strengthen people to people relations.

+We had a very useful exchange of views on the whole spectrum of our bilateral relations as well as on regional and international issues earlier today,+ he added.

The three agreements, which Malaysia and Laos had signed, would form a good basis for future co-operation in various fields, Dr Mahathir said.

They were the Air Services Agreement, the Investment Guarantee Agreement and the Economic, Scientific and Technical Co-operation Agreement.

The Prime Minister hoped that the agreements would provide the impetus for good and mutually beneficial economic co-operation between Malaysia and Laos, -- more

▼08/12/22-47MST

U GE 08-12 001.73 ED163

aae

Mahathir - Laos 3 Kuala Lumpur

He assured his Laostian counterpart that Malaysia as a friend and neighbour was ready to co-operate in areas where it had the experience, expertise and means consistent with its active support for and commitment towards greater South-South co-operation.

+We have also fully supported the decision of Asean to accord observer status to Laos and we look forward to the day, when Laos will become a member of Asean,+ Dr Mahathir said.

+We firmly believe that Laos and other countries in Southeast Asia should be given the opportunity to make rapid progress from now on.+

+This will set the stage for this region to become and even more dynamic growth area and significant player in the world economic and trading systems. +

In the full spirit of good, neighbourliness and in the interest of regional peace, stability and cohesion, Malaysia had welcomed Laos' accession to the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia, he said. -- more

▼08/12/23-01MST

U GE 08-12 00229 ED164

aae

Mahathir - Laos 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Dr Mahathir noted that Laos and Malaysia had worked closely together with the Cambodians and other countries concerned towards the achievement of the Paris Peace Agreement on Cambodia.

+Both our countries made some useful contribution; in our role as Co-Chairmen of the Second Committee of the Paris International Conference on Cambodia.+

A comprehensive and durable settlement in Cambodia could only be achieved if all the Cambodian parties were to fully co-operate with the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia in the discharge of its mandate and respect the decisions of the United Nations Security Council, he said.

The Prime Minister said Siphandone's visit to Malaysia was timely as the countries in Southeast Asia were individually and collectively in the midst of responding to the rapid changes in the international political and economic scene.

There was a need to promote greater understanding and goodwill and to strengthen friendship and co-operation in the region and we must be willing to resolve old or emerging issues peacefully and refrain from actions that could be detrimental to our own well-being.+

+This is now the time for the countries of Southeast Asia to forge ahead in their effort to develop and prosper in a climate of durable peace and stability,+ Dr Mahathir said. -- more

▼08/12/23-27MST

CNS7416  
U GE 08-12 0015'7 ED166  
aae

Mahathir - Laos 5 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Meanwhile Siphandone in his speech said that his country highly valued the important and constructive role played by Malaysia in the international arena.

He said such efforts were important in order to promote peace, friendship and good cooperation among nations in Southeast Asia as well as in the world based on the principles of equality and reciprocal interests.

Apart from that, he said that his government was also impressed with the rapid socio-economic development of Malaysia.

These great successes are evidence of the correct policy and the competence of the Malaysian Government and the hardwork of the Malaysian people.

On relations between the two countries Siphandone said the three agreements signed today formed a solid basis for future development of the relationship and we will do our utmost to turn what we have agreed upon into reality. -- Bernama

08/12/23-31MST