

CNS2840

R GE 17-08 00249 EF956

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Mahathir-Cambodia

(Embargo: for release at 2200 hours today)

SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES NEED TO POOL TALENTS AND RESOURCES

194 (9)
KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 17 (Bernama) -- The talents and resources of the countries of Southeast Asia should be collectively mobilised to enhance regional stability, security and prosperity, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

He said that they should be directed towards increasing the level and intensity of cooperation among the Southeast Asian countries.

"We are now at the dawn of a new history of Southeast Asia. We must, therefore, continue to cast our eyes firmly on the future so as to chart a common destiny for all the countries of this region through increased cooperation among ourselves as well as with other countries outside the region," he said.

Speaking at a dinner in honour of visiting First Prime Minister of Cambodia Prince Norodom Ranarindh, Dr Mahathir said that the bitter history of distrust and fear must, therefore, be firmly relegated to the past and should not affect the thinking and action of the countries in the region.

Dr Mahathir also welcomed Cambodia's intention to join Asean and described it as "a very positive move" which would bring closer the objective of making Asean truly an association embracing all the 10 Southeast Asian nations.

"Malaysia welcomes and fully support Cambodia's desire to become a member of Asean," he said. -- more

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Mahathir-Cambodia 2 (last) Kuala Lumpur

On Malaysia-Cambodia relationship, the Prime Minister reiterated that Malaysia remained committed to helping in the reconstruction and development of Cambodia and to increasing trade and enhancing relations and cooperation in various fields.

"Malaysia is prepared to cooperate and assist in any way we can to help Cambodia through this crucial period," he said.

He said that the Malaysian private sector was also keen to assist Cambodia and in the last past two years, the pace and variety of trade and investment cooperation between the two countries had expanded.

Dr Mahathir hoped Cambodia, which had made remarkable strides in the brief period since the establishment of the Royal Government, would persevere in its efforts to further liberalise and develop the economy.

This was important to ensure the continued improvement of the well-being of the Cambodian people, he said and added: "The passage of the new Cambodian investment law is a step in the right direction." -- Bernama

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Mahathir - Cambodia 3 (last) Kuala Lumpur (reopens item)

Ranariddh, in his reply, welcomed Malaysian investors to Cambodia which had opened every aspect of its economy for development with priority in human resources development of which he hoped to get some form of cooperation.

He said that in order to coordinate and facilitate private investments and all forms of international aids into Cambodia, a Council of Development had been set up.

The council was set up after the Investment Law, a legal framework of investment in the country, was accepted by the National Council, he said.

Ranariddh said the legal framework of investment was attractive, pragmatic, liberal and dynamic.

He also praised Dr Mahathir's vision of setting up the East Asia Economic Caucus (EAEC), and hoped that Cambodia could contribute in the setting up of the caucus. --Bernama

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