

30 JUL 1996

Abdullah-Austria (With pix)

MALAYSIA, AUSTRIA AGREE TO STEP UP COOPERATION

KUALA LUMPUR, July 30 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will send its students for post-graduate studies in sustainable rainforest management in Austria, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi said today.

He said Austria had offered scholarships worth 500,000 Austrian Shilling (ATS) or about RM125,000 in this field.

The offer was made by Austrian Chancellor Dr Franz Vranitzky during his meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Prime Minister's office, here, today. The two then led their respective delegations in a delegation meeting.

Abdullah told a news conference after the meeting that Malaysia and Austria also agreed to step up trade which was considered small as the total did not even reach RM200 million.

Dr Vranitzky arrived here for a four-day visit today, leading a delegation including Finance Minister Viktor Klima and (Minister of Health, Sports and Consumer Protection Christa Krammer and 61 representatives from the private sector.

Abdullah said the two leaders also exchanged views on Bosnia Herzegovina, reforms to the United Nations and efforts to enhance Asia-Europe relations.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Vranitzky, who both attended the first Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem) in Bangkok in March, agreed that the relationship should be based on cooperation and should not be confrontational in nature.

The prime minister also explained Malaysia's foreign relations philosophy of wanting its neighbours to prosper, Abdullah said.

He said that besides encouraging the private sectors of both countries to cooperate in small- and medium-scale industries Malaysia and Austria would also cooperate in the field of health.

After the delegation meeting, Dr Mahathir and Dr Vranitzky witnessed the signing of an agreement and four memorandums of understanding (MoUs) between the private sectors of the two countries.

The agreement between AME Beteiligungs und Handelages mbH and Radicare (M) Sdn Bhd is for the management of medical equipment and hospital information services for the new Selayang hospital.

The four MoUs involve:

+ Muenze Oesterreich AG (Austrian Mint Corporation) and Mariwasa Kraftangan Sdn Bhd to produce legal tender commemorative coins and circulation coins and medals in Malaysia

+ Vamed Engineering-Medical and Hospital Engineering Co Ltd of Vienna and Sungei CeraH Sdn Bhd for the acquisition of a majority stake in Vamed Engineering (M) Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Vamed, with the purpose of cooperating in the health care field in Malaysia and other Southeast Asian countries.

+BWT-AG and Consistent Wisdom Sdn Bhd on the launch of a joint-venture company, BWT (M) Sdn Bhd, to develop activities in the field of water treatment technology.

+ Elin Electric Industries Sdn Bhd and Abrar Group International Sdn Bhd and Manfield Development Sdn Bhd on the pursuit of a joint marketing strategy in Malaysia in the field of thermal and hydro power generation.

-- BERNAMA

AZZ JK