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Asem-Students

BRITAIN TO HELP MALAYSIAN STUDENTS IN FINANCIAL LIMBO

By: Wan A Hulaimi

LONDON, April 4 (Bernama) -- The British government has offered to assist Malaysian students in financial difficulties due to the ringgit's depreciation.

The offer was made by British Prime Minister Tony Blair to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during their bilateral meeting Friday.

A similar offer was conveyed by Foreign Secretary Robin Cook to his Malaysian counterpart Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi when they also met for a bilateral meeting.

Dr Mahathir and Abdullah are in London attending the Second Asia-Europe (ASEM) meeting.

The offers, made by two senior members of the British cabinet, were the first indication of the interest shown by Britain to help Malaysian students in the face of the current economic downturn.

Some British universities with high Malaysian student enrolment had offered to reduce the fees for students facing financial problems.

"Both Prime Minister Blair and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said they valued very much the fact that Malaysia was sending its students to Britain because this help promote better relationship between the two countries as well as bring benefits to both sides," Abdullah told a news conference.

Abdullah said in his discussions with Cook on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, he (Cook) said that he would like to attend a conference in Kuala Lumpur in August on the management of ethnic relations with reference to the Malaysian experience.

In another bilateral meeting, German Foreign Minister Dr Klaus Kinkel told Abdullah that his country would like to increase its foreign direct investments (FDIs) in Malaysia.

Dr Kinkel expressed his sympathy for what was happening on the economic and financial front in Malaysia and Indonesia but was convinced that " we would recover because our fundamentals are strong," Abdullah said. --

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