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FUNDS, WATER ISSUE DOMINATE MAHATHIR-GOH TALKS

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KUALA ALUMPUR, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his Singapore counterpart Goh Chok Tong today continued their talks on the proposal for the republic to help raise funds for Malaysia.

The long-term water supply by Malaysia to Singapore was also discussed, Goh told reporters after emerging from the bilateral talks with Dr Mahathir on the sidelines of the Apec Summit which kicks off tomorrow.

The talks were a follow-up to their earlier meeting held here two weeks ago in which they agreed to set aside differences between the two countries and work towards enhancing bilateral ties.

Malaysia-Singapore ties strained for several months over the Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) issue as well as negative remarks on Malaysia's past leaders published in a book written by former Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

At the last meeting, Goh had pledged to help Malaysia raise funds in the republic to help finance the country's economic recovery while Dr Mahathir gave an assurance to look into the republic's long-term water needs.

On the water issue, Goh said: "We are not talking about immediate requirements but something beyond the year 2061.

" There is a convergence of views," he said when asked on the outcome of the 45-minute talks at the Palace of the Golden Horses Hotel.

Goh said the officials of the two countries would follow up and "we hope it can be settled amicably," he added.

-- BERNAMA

ARA/MR TS