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Hariri `came to see what was happening'

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon - Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri told Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today that the main purpose of his visit to Malaysia was to see what was happening in this country.

Hariri said he also wanted to discuss with the Prime Minister the various aspects of the economic problems and see what measures the Malaysian Government had taken.

Briefing reporters after a one-hour delegations meeting led by Dr Mahathir and Hariri at the Prime Minister's Department, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Hariri indicated his concern for the Malaysian economy.

"Hariri said Malaysia is a friend of Lebanon and he felt he should come here personally to meet our Prime Minister."

Dr Mahathir, according to Abdullah, expressed his appreciation of Hariri's friendly gesture and believed bilateral relations would continue to expand.

Approached by Lebanese newsmen immediately after the meeting, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was interested in the reconstruction of Lebanon and that the tourism industry was a good field.

Abdullah said their discussions also included operations and procedures in banking and for the central banks of both countries to exchange information.

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