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Mahathir-Johor

JOHOR LUCKY TO HAVE SINGAPORE AS NEIGHBOUR, SAYS MAHATHIR

JOHOR BAHRU, April 18 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Johor is lucky to have Singapore as a neighbour considering that many Singaporeans come here to go shopping.

"Singaporeans are not only rich...they need place for relaxation and recreation too and with Johor just nearby, many are coming over," he said when opening the RM400 million Johor Baharu Duty Free Complex here tonight. Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong was also present.

He said this in a way had contributed to the presence of many luxury hotels in Johor.

In this respect, Dr Mahathir was confident that ties between Malaysia and Singapore would grow for the better with peoples of both countries no longer hesitating to visit one another.

This would further strengthen the cooperation of the Indonesia-Malaysia-Singapore Growth Triangle (IMS-GT), he said.

Likening Malaysia-Singapore ties as that of a husband and wife, Dr Mahathir said although there were slight hiccups, both countries still benefited from existing cooperation.

"Usually we have problems with someone near to us, not those far away...like husband and wife," he said in jest.

Dr Mahathir said he was glad to note that inspite of the economic downturn, the situation in Johor seemed different where people could be seen shopping almost everywhere.

He hoped that the Johor Baharu Duty Free Complex would not only be a popular attraction among people in the state but also those from Singapore and Indonesia.

-- BERNAMA
MKO AH ABG