

23 JUL 1998

Abdullah-Thai

MALAYSIA AND THAILAND AGREE TO HASTEN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

MANILA, July 23 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and Thailand have agreed to speed up the implementation of a scholarship programme for poor students with the money provided by companies involved in petroleum and gas exploration in their joint development area.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said there was no need in "dilly-dallying" as the money for the programme was available.

Moreover, the students in the area in Southern Thailand were waiting for the scholarships, he told reporters after a bilateral meeting with Thai Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan at the Manila Hotel here today.

They are here for the Asean Ministerial Meeting (AMM) to be opened by Philippine President Joseph Estrada tomorrow.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his Thai counterpart Chuan Leekpai had during their meeting recently agreed on the need for the programme, Abdullah said.

Abdullah said he and Surin had agreed on the agency to implement the programme and would inform their Prime Minister.

He said they had discussed a number of things as a follow-up to the meeting between Dr Mahathir and Chuan and were happy with the progress.

This included inter-state transportation that would encourage trade.

Surin also told Abdullah about the situation in Cambodia as the Thai minister is a member of the Asean troika handling the matter.

"He's hoping the election in Cambodia will be credible," he said.

Abdullah told Surin that Malaysia had sent an observer's team headed by former Asean Secretary-General Datuk Ajit Singh for the Cambodian election.

-- BERNAMA

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