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MAHATHIR CONGRATULATES NEW RUSSIAN PREMIER

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 18 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today congratulated Vladimir Putin on his appointment as Russia's new Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir expressed hope that under Putin's leadership Russia would forge ahead as a strong, stable and prosperous nation.

Malaysia greatly valued her relations with Russia and looked forward to deepening and enhancing them for mutual benefit, Dr Mahathir said in a message to Putin released by the Foreign Ministry here.

"It is for this reason that I am currently undertaking a working visit to Khabarovsk Krai. I will also be visiting the republic of Buryatia and Irkutsk," Dr Mahathir said.

He ended a three-day visit to Khabarovskii in the eastern end of Russia and will visit Buryatia and Irkutsk after his three-day visit to China which began today.

Dr Mahathir expressed hope that the coming visits would further promote trade and economic ties between Malaysia and Russia.

"May I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the government of the Russian Federation for facilitating my visits to Khabarovsk, Buryatia and Irkutsk," he added.

-- BERNAMA

AFY RYN