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Mahathir-Indon

KL-JAKARTA TALKS EVERY SIX MONTHS TO ENHANCE COOPERATION

KUALA LUMPUR, March 10 (Bernama) -- Malaysian and Indonesian leaders will meet every six months for bilateral talks to further strengthen cooperation between Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The meetings will be held alternatively in each other's capital.

"We have agreed with the President to have bilateral talks every six months," the prime minister said at an airport press conference in Subang here today upon returning from an overnight official visit to Indonesia.

Dr Mahathir also expressed confidence that President Abdurrahman Wahid, fondly known as Gus Dur, was in a good and able position to lead Indonesia through the country's problems given the strong support he enjoyed from most Indonesians and the main political parties in the republic.

"Just as in Malaysia, there are also the usual disgruntled lot and detractors in Indonesia who prefer to stage demonstrations and the like.

"But generally, the majority of Indonesians wish to see their country free of disruptions by irresponsible elements," said Dr Mahathir.

Dr Mahathir said at present Indonesia was in a period of transition from one system to another.

He said Indonesia needed trade and investment from other countries including Malaysia.

On the proposal to build a bridge between Sumatra and Peninsular Malaysia, the Prime Minister said for the present it was not essential "as we do not have the means but it may become a reality one day."

-- BERNAMA

GM AAM