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PM opens Malaysian Embassy complex

Hardev Kaur; Kasmiah Mustapa in Bangkok

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday officially opened the Malaysian Embassy Complex in the Thai capital. The complex on a 2.4ha site in the city centre houses the Malaysian Embassy and staff quarters.

The design and materials used in the building, the architecture and the decorations, reflect both Malaysian and Thai aspects.

In his address to the gathering, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia-Thai relations had improved over the years, adding that the two countries saw "eye-to-eye" on most issues.

The two countries are recovering strongly from the recent crisis and have worked together to foster closer relations in South East Asia.

They are also the founder members of Asean and have worked together with the Philippines, Indonesia and Singapore to create a peaceful South East Asian region so that the countries can achieve economic growth without interference.

Malaysia, he said, had learnt a lot from Thailand, beginning with the first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman who had sent officials to Thailand for training. The Embassy complex will act as a "home away from home" for Malaysians here.

Dr Mahathir, who is here to attend the opening of the 10th session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development(Unctad X) tomorrow, also held several bilateral meetings and together with other Asean leaders meet the Secretary-General Kofi Annan. This is the first such meeting of Asean leaders with Annan.

Meanwhile, Bernama reports that Dr Mahathir will be the first leader to address the Unctad gathering at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre. He is expected to touch on key trade and globalisation issues.

He will be followed by the leaders of Indonesia, Singapore, Japan and the Philippines.

Dr Mahathir will take part in the inaugural high-level talks between Asean and the UN prior to the opening ceremony of Unctad X.

He is also expected to hold talks with key leaders, including Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi.

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