

Thaksin: We know Malaysia never backed separatists

STAR 25 APR 2001

KUALA LUMPUR: Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said his government believes Malaysia has never supported Thai separatists operating along the border of the two countries.

On the contrary, he said, Thailand received "tremendous" co-operation and support from Malaysia against the separatists.

"Yes, we are satisfied with the guarantee of the Malaysian Government. We are confident of the policy of the Malaysian Government towards separatists," he said during a press conference yesterday.

He said Thailand might ask Malaysia to arrest separatists with arrest warrants.

He said this in response to whether Thailand was satis-

fied with the assurances by Malaysia that the country has never supported any Thai separatist movement.

He said he did not think the separatists' activities could jeopardise bilateral ties.

"The co-operation between the security authorities of the two countries is very close. We are hoping to solve this together. Dr Mahathir supports the co-operation," he added.

Thaksin said problems arose when the separatists held dual citizenship.

Later at a banquet at Seri Perdana in Putrajaya for Thaksin, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said more concrete measures would have to be taken to tap business opportunities in both countries.