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Syed Hamid-Indonesia

BILATERAL TIES BETWEEN M'SIA AND INDONESIA NOT STRAINED

SUNGAI PETANI, April 15 (Bernama) -- Bilateral ties between Malaysia and Indonesia will not be strained as long as the Indonesian government does not officially endorse the reformasi movement in Malaysia.

Foreign minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the Indonesian government had made its stance that it would not get involved in the internal politics of Malaysia.

"The Indonesian Foreign Ministry has said that they will not get involved in the internal problems of Malaysia. That is suffice for us," he told reporters after officiating the Sungai Petani Umno Division's delegates conference here today.

He was asked to comment on Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's statement yesterday that reformasi activists were planning on bringing in Indonesians to join in militant street demonstrations to threatened the country's peace.

Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, was quoted as saying that the police had information on the link between the reformasi group here and certain groups of people in Indonesia.

Syed Hamid said as long as there was no official endorsement and there was the assurance from the Indonesian government not to meddle in internal affairs, it should not affect bilateral ties between both countries.

"When we are unhappy about something and have proof to back our claim, we will take it up with the Indonesian government for further action. This is the spirit and principle on which Asean solidarity is based.

"There is no group in Indonesia, which is preoccupied with their own internal problems, who want to meddle in our affairs but it our people who had invited them and failed. This is a question of security and we will be cautious and monitor any eventuality," he added.

Meanwhile, Syed Hamid said there were always people who would look for scapegoats for any incident that takes place in their country.

He was commenting on a statement made by Thai security sources on April 10 who claimed that seperatists groups, responsible for the recent explosion in Southern Thailand, had met in Kuala Lumpur to plan the attack.

The source was quoted as saying that the meeting was held in March in Kuala Lumpur before the seperatist group sent the bomb experts to Southern Thailand.

In the explosion which occured in Haadyai and Betong on April 7, a child was killed and many others were injured including a Malaysian.

The Thai Consular General in Penang, Suwit Saicheua was reported as saying on April 12 that Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was expected to discuss the bomb incident with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during his visit to Malaysia at the end of this month.

Syed Hamid said the Malaysian government had repeatedly stated that it would not get involved in any seperatist groups.

"Political indifferences and misunderstandings are a country's internal problems. But if they (Thailand) want to show proof that Malaysia is involved, we will cooperate and see what happens," he said.

The minister added that Malaysia stood by its principle not to allow any seperatist group to use Malaysia as a training ground.

-- BERNAMA

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