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Malaysian embassy in Prague by year end

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - A Malaysian embassy will be established in the Czech Republic by the end of the year, Foreign Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar said yesterday.

He said this would enhance bilateral co-operation following the upgrading of the Czech mission here to an embassy last year.

At present, Malaysia only has a charge d' affaires at its mission in Prague.

According to Syed Hamid, officers expected to serve in the embassy have been indentified. However the search is still on for a suitable location in Prague.

As to the appointment of an ambassador, he said it had yet to be decided by the Ministry and Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Syed Hamid was speaking to reporters after a bilateral meeting with Czech Republic Deputy Foreign Minister Dr Hynek Kmonicek.

His visit to Malaysia is to strengthen the diplomatic ties created when Czech Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pavel Mertelek visited last November.

Syed Hamid said Kmonicek had said during their closed door meeting that the Czech Republic considers Malaysia a reliable partner and wants to widen the scope of co-operation between both countries.

He said that the Czech Republic welcomes strategic partnerships with Malaysia in tourism, investments and education.

Syed Hamid said the Government would give scholarships to students who are interested in pursuing their studies at the Prague University which is one of the oldest educational institutions in Europe.

He also said the Deputy Minister extended an invitation to him and Dr Mahathir to visit Prague.

Kmonicek is accompanied by the director-general of the Asia Pacific Department of the Czech Foreign Affairs Ministry Vaclav Hubinger.

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