

24 OCT 2001
US-RELATIONS
NEW CHAPTER IN US-M'SIA RELATIONS

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 24 (Bernama) -- Last week's bilateral meeting between US President George W Bush and Malaysia's Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has set the scene for greater co-operation between the two countries, said US-Asean Business Council president Ernest Bower.

"We are beginning a new chapter in US-Malaysia relations following the Bush-Mahathir meeting in Shanghai's APEC summit," he said during a video conference on "US Economic Prospects and Its Impact on US-Asean Trade & Investment" on Tuesday night.

The event was jointly organised by the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) and the US-Asean Business Council, with the support of the US Embassy.

Malaysia-US relations had turned sour during the Clinton administration but the visit by US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick on Oct 15 had set the scene for improved relations.

"He had a very good meeting with the Prime Minister, the Minister of International Trade and Industry (Datuk Seri) Rafidah Aziz and the Foreign Minister (Datuk Syed Hamid Albar).

"The statements that came out of those meetings served as a (sign) to the US leadership that Malaysia is a partner and not the enemy," said Bower who spoke from Washington DC.

The other panellist from the US are Merrill Lynch Global Securities Research & Economics's international economist Ron Wexler, Technology and Trade for Information Technology Industry Council senior vice-president Kathryn Hauser and Manufacturing Institute of the National Association of Manufacturers executive director William Canis.

The Malaysian panellist are FMM vice-president Datuk Paul Low, Ministry of International Trade & Industry deputy secretary general Sidek Hassan, Sunway group Corporate Adviser Dan Sri Ramon Navaratnam and FMM council member Tan Sri Clifford Herbert. -- BERNAMA

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