

22 AUG 2001

Mahathir-Yemen

PM SAYS ENCOUNTER WITH DESERT FLASH FLOOD A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 22 (Bernama) -- The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said encountering a desert flash flood during his first official visit to Yemen last week was an extraordinary experience.

Due to the flash flood, he had to be ferried by helicopter for his date with Malaysian law students at the Al-Ahqaf University in Ta'arim about 40km from Seiyun town in the flood-hit Hadhramout region following heavy rain at several places there.

Dr Mahathir visited Yemen for four days from Aug 15 before proceeding to Uganda to attend the Global 2001 Smart Partnership International Dialogue in Kampala.

Relating his experience to reporters upon returning from Kampala today, Dr Mahathir said close ties between Yemen and Malaysia evolved not only in the course of propagating Islam but also because several Malaysians are of Yemeni descent, including those instrumental in setting up Umno.

These dignitaries include the late Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tun Syed Nasir Ismail and the late Umno Youth chief Tan Sri Syed Jaafar Albar who were both of Yemeni descent.

In fact, Dr Mahathir said, there is a sizeable number of Yemenis who can converse in Malay and people of Yemeni descent are found in several countries, including Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Malaysia.

For instance, he said descendants of the Al-Sagof and Al-Junied Yemeni families in Singapore are very wealthy and successful.

-- BERNAMA

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