

16 MAY 2001  
VAJPAYEE-VISIT  
VAJPAYEE DESCRIBES VISIT AS SUCCESSFUL

KUALA LUMPUR, 16 May (Bernama) -- Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee described his visit to Malaysia as very successful and a happy one, said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar today

Speaking to reporters after a talk organised by the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations here, he said Vajpayee had told him that he had had productive and constructive discussions with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during his visit here.

Vajpayee had brought the biggest-ever Indian delegation to visit Malaysia from May 13 to May 16, with an entourage of 135 members, of which 65 were from the private sector.

He said the trip had been worthwhile judging from the number of memoranda of understanding (MOU) being signed between the Malaysian and Indian private sectors.

As for matters pertaining to regional security touched by the Indian premier at today's talk, Syed Hamid said he was happy that Vajpayee had reiterated India's intention to respect and agree to Asia's treaty on a nuclear-free zone.

Vajpayee had said that India, a nuclear weapon state, will respect the status of Southeast Asia as a nuclear-free zone.

India became a sectoral dialogue partner of Asean in 1992, a full dialogue partner in 1995 and member of the Asean Regional Forum in 1996.

Meanwhile, the Indian Prime Minister's delegation had earlier during the trip, visited Putrajaya as well as taken to view Petronas Twin Tower, the tallest building in the world.

Issues of importance to both Malaysia and India such as on commodity tariffs, globalization, trade and investment were given due consideration during discussions, talks and forums held throughout the visit.

Matters concerning the high import levy imposed on palm oil has been pursued actively with India making a commitment to review the levy while at the same time, Malaysia has agreed to rectify the imbalance in bilateral trade.

The visit too saw a total of 15 MOUs being signed, including two relating to space technology and programme.

The confidence over future cooperation in trade and investment between the two countries also saw the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) voicing its intention to open its office in Malaysia, its 10th overseas. --

BERNAMA

SHO SEL