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Malaysia-Powell

MALAYSIA WANTS TO KNOW OF US PLANS ON WEST ASIA

KUALA LUMPUR, July 27 (Bernama) -- Malaysia wants to know what steps the United States (US) were taking to end the violence in West Asia when its Secretary of State Colin Powell arrives here for a visit on Monday.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said other matters that would be discussed included efforts at enhancing bilateral, regional and international relations.

"We are interested to know what steps are being taken by the US next in tackling the Palestinian-Israeli conflict," he told reporters after opening the Smart News Network International (SNNi) workshop, here today.

He described the Powell visit as positive and welcomed it as it would enable Malaysia to exchange views with the US.

He said the visit by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to the US earlier this year had contributed significantly in opening up bilateral relations encompassing various matters including the economy.

Besides Syed Hamid, Powell is scheduled to meet Dr Mahathir and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Powell is on an eight-day tour of Asian countries from July 27 to Aug 3.

His first stop would be India and Pakistan where he was expected to convince both countries to ease the conflict between them.

On July 28, Powell will proceed to Bangkok before coming to Malaysia and Singapore on July 29 and 30.

Powell will attend the Asean Foreign Ministers' meeting with dialogue partners in Brunei on July 31 and Aug 1. Thereafter, he would proceed to Indonesia and the Philippines as his last stop on Aug 3.

-- BERNAMA

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