

Win-win solution with Brunei sought

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BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN: Malaysia and Brunei will work out a win-win formula over their common border at Limbang, at the innermost tip of Sarawak.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said officials from both countries would meet on July 22 to come up with the formula.

"In terms of principles, any formula must benefit both countries.

"Our Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) and the Sultan (of Brunei) also want this to happen," he told reporters on the first day of his two-day official visit to the Sultanate yesterday.

Earlier, he had a four-eye meeting with Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah to discuss how both sides could resolve the dispute

on Limbang and other bilateral issues.

Abdullah said they agreed that both countries should benefit from sharing the land and maritime border at Limbang.

He said Malaysia considered Brunei as "very important" at the bilateral level as well as at other higher levels, including in Asean, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the United Nations and at other global forums.

"There are 35,000 Malaysians working in Brunei, the biggest number of Malaysians living abroad in any country," he added.

Abdullah said the Limbang issue would not jeopardise ties between the

two countries, adding that the issue must be settled soon because it had dragged on for too long.

He described his meeting with the Sultan as "very fruitful" and both countries agreed to enhance joint co-operation in all fields.

During a dialogue with Malaysians, Abdullah spoke on why Malaysia would not allow foreign enforcement agencies to simply enter the country and monitor or supervise security work or conduct pre-emptive strikes.

"It is not that Malaysia is very stubborn. We have co-operated with all in international issues and against terrorism, but there must be no interference in our domestic affairs," he said.