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S'pore-Wishes

GOH CONVEYS BEST WISHES TO DR MAHATHIR AND CONGRATULATES ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 31 (Bernama) -- Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong conveys his best wishes to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his future endeavours and congratulates Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on his appointment as Malaysia's fifth Prime Minister.

He said Dr Mahathir had transformed Malaysia into a modern, progressive and confident nation with a sound economy.

"Malaysians are proud of what they have achieved, and of who they are. With the smooth leadership transition, your successor, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, is well-placed to build on your achievements," the island republic premier said in a letter to Dr Mahathir.

Copy of the letter and also that to Abdullah were faxed to Bernama by the Singapore High Commission here.

Abdullah was sworn in today as Malaysia's fifth Prime Minister, taking over from Dr Mahathir, who has helmed the nation for 22 years.

Goh said Singapore and Malaysia shared many common interests, despite the complexities of their bilateral relations.

Although various issues have arisen, which put relations between the two countries under some strain, Goh believed that given goodwill on both sides, these disagreements could be resolved and cooperation between the two countries strengthened.

Goh and his wife wished Dr Mahathir and his wife Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali good health and happiness.

In his letter congratulating Abdullah, Goh said Abdullah took over as Malaysia's fifth Prime Minister at a time of great change and uncertainty in the world.

"I am confident that under your stewardship, Malaysia will achieve further success. You will lead a country that has been transformed by many years of steady growth, and is confident of its future," he said.

Saying that Abdullah has the unique opportunity to build on the achievements of Dr Mahathir and other leaders before him, Goh wished Abdullah best journey to realise his vision for Malaysia.

"Our countries share an enduring relationship as close neighbours. As you have put it, we live in a pair of semi-detached houses.

We should, therefore, continue to look for ways to cooperate for mutual benefit, even as we manage the complexities of bilateral relations," Goh said.

He also invited Abdullah and his wife, Datin Seri Endon Mahmood to visit Singapore at their earliest convenience and wished both of them good health, happiness and success.

-- BERNAMA

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