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Syed Hamid-Ties

M'SIA-ALGERIA TIES TO BE FURTHER ENHANCED - SYED HAMID

From Mokhtar Hussain

ALGIERS, Aug 11 (Bernama) -- Ties between Malaysia and Algeria are set to make headway following the signing of an agreement on trade and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) here today.

The agreement was signed after a "four-eye" talk between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, followed by a delegation meeting of both countries at the Algerian presidential residence here.

The agreement was signed by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar and the Algerian Senior Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abdelaziz Belkhadem, in the presence of Dr Mahathir and Bouteflika.

Speaking to Malaysian journalists later, Syed Hamid said the two-hour discussions, among others, focused on bilateral and international issues pertaining to trade and investment.

"The meeting also touched on issues, particularly in respect of the G-15 cooperation," he said.

Dr Mahathir is leading a delegation comprising Cabinet ministers, Menteris Besar and businessmen on a three-day official visit to this northern African nation.

The visit, at the invitation of Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, is mainly aimed at building a strong partnership with Algeria, particularly in its nation-building efforts.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir laid a wreath to commemorate those who died fighting for Algeria's independence at the capital's Martyrs' Monument.

Algeria achieved independence 40 years ago after a violent insurrection against French rule between 1954 and 1962. Between 200,000 and 400,000 lives were lost in the war.

Upon arrival yesterday, Dr Mahathir was accorded a 21-gun salute as he was greeted by Bouteflika at the Algiers Houari Boumedine Airport.

Today, Dr Mahathir and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, visited the new "cyber" town of Sidi Abdellah, about 25km from the capital city.

The Prime Minister will then attend a state dinner to be hosted by Bouteflika at the Palais Du Peuple (Palace of the People).

-- BERNAMA

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