

19 MAY 2003

RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTER CALLS ON DR MAHATHIR

PUTRAJAYA, May 19 (Bernama) -- Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad here today.

The meeting, at the Treasury building here, lasted for about 45 minutes. Dr Mahathir is also Finance Minister.

During the meeting, Dr Mahathir and Ivanov held discussions focused on Malaysian-Russian defence ties and matters of mutual interest.

Ivanov, who arrived here yesterday, is leading a 17-member delegation on a three-day visit.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who earlier met Ivanov, told reporters that Malaysia has agreed in principle to buy 18 Russian-made Sukhoi SU-30 jet fighters in a deal valued at about US\$900 million (RM3.420 billion) as part of Malaysia's military modernisation programme.

-- BERNAMA

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