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Vietnam-SARS

VIETNAMESE WORKERS ARE FREE FROM SARS, SAYS ENVOY

KUALA LUMPUR, March 25 (Bernama) -- Vietnamese workers in Malaysia are free from the atypical pneumonia which has claimed several lives around the globe, its ambassador here, Tran Tron Toan, said today.

He said Vietnamese workers in Malaysia had undergone complete medical treatment to ensure that they were free from the "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome" (SARS).

He said the disease in his country was well under control and the cause had also been determined.

"We do a full medical check of our workers so that they come here safely. The workers who come here are not from the city of Hanoi, they are from the rural areas which are not affected by the disease.

"The disease was detected only at the hospital in Hanoi and not in the other cities," he told a media conference on the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and Vietnam.

Toan said that there were no more patients hospitalised in Vietnam and tourists should not be worried about visiting that country.

On the Iraq war, he said that as a country that had been involved in a war before, Vietnam had lost precious time in national salvation and independence against foreign aggression and domination as a result of the war.

Vietnam was stressing that war was not the solution to the crisis because people liked to live in peace, he said.

He also praised Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir for his stand against the war, especially during last month's 13th Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Malaysia.

On the 30 years of friendship and diplomatic relations between Vietnam and Malaysia, Toan said that from now until April, various exchange programmes and activities would be held such as discussions and meetings among leaders.

Most of the events would be held in Hanoi and the two countries had been actively preparing to observe this auspicious date with various activities throughout the month.

He said that when Vietnam gained complete liberation on April 30, 1975, and reunification of the country under the new name as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1976, Malaysia was one the first countries to have recognised the united Vietnam.

He said Vietnam admired Malaysia for its remarkable success and had a lot to learn from Malaysia's experience, especially in economics and human resource development as well as environmental protection.

It also encouraged its students to further their education in Malaysia which provides affordable, quality education and good training in information communication technology (ICT).

Currently, he said, there were over 100 Vietnamese students studying in Malaysian universities.

-- BERNAMA

SSA KAT AHH JK