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Syed Hamid-Security

SECURITY MAY FEATURE IN BANGKOK TALKS, SAYS SYED HAMID

PUTRAJAYA, Jan 15 (Bernama) -- Stressing that there is no specific topic for discussion during the visit by Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to Thailand tomorrow, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar nevertheless said that security issues may feature in high-level talks in Bangkok.

Being neighbours, he said, Malaysia and Thailand would need to ensure close cooperation in terms of maintaining security and fighting terrorist groups.

"Apart from other bilateral issues, I believe that both prime ministers (Abdullah and his Thai counterpart Thaksin Shinawatra) would talk about the latest situation concerning security and possible threats," he told reporters after launching a book on former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at Wisma Putra, here.

The authorities in Thailand and Malaysia have boosted their cooperation following a spate of violence in southern Thailand earlier this month.

"In any incident which takes place in Thailand which has got an element of possible terrorist activities or those which can destabilise or interfere with peace and security, of course both sides are interested to cooperate and work together on specific areas for prevention (purposes)," Syed Hamid said.

The minister expressed confidence that the good relations between Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok would be further deepened with Abdullah's visit, which is part of his familiarisation tour of Asean capitals since becoming Prime Minister on Oct 31 last year.

Syed Hamid said that both sides were keen to increase collaboration in economic activities and trade as well as tourism.

"As I see it, the visit is aimed at enhancing further our understanding and cooperation," he said, adding that it would serve to renew

leader-to-leader ties.

He said Abdullah's tour so far had brought about new approaches which would enable Malaysia to carry out its foreign policy in a manner that should be beneficial in terms of its relations with other Asean countries.

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