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Thaksin confident of maintaining close ties with KL

LANGKAWI, Mon. - Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is confident bilateral ties between Malaysia and Thailand will continue to be strong after Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi takes over as Prime Minister in October.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said Thaksin had expressed this to him on the sidelines of the Malaysia-Thailand Technology and Business Partnership Dialogue which started yesterday.

He was speaking after sending off Thaksin at the Langkawi International airport this morning. Also present were Second Finance Minister Datuk Dr Jamaludin Jarjis and Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain.

Thaksin also attended the annual consultation between the Prime Ministers of both nations.

Syed Hamid said Thaksin was touched by the warm welcome given to him by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during his visit here.

"Based on this and the smooth proceedings of the bilateral talks, we are confident that suggestions and proposals raised during discussions will become reality," he said.

On the issue of Thai and Malaysian residents with citizenships of both countries, Syed Hamid said the issue was discussed with both parties hoping the problem would be solved soon.