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PM: More trade will boost KL-Bangkok ties

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia and Thailand must make greater efforts to increase trade and investment between them, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said last night.

He pointed out that while Malaysia and Thailand were important partners in trade and investment, both countries traded and invested more in other countries.

"An enhancement of our bilateral trade and investment relations will not only be mutually beneficial but will also bring our two countries closer," he said at a dinner in honour of visiting Thai Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont at the Petronas Twin Towers here.

Present were Abdullah's wife

Datin Seri Jeanne Abdullah and Surayud's wife Khunying Chitravadee and the Thai delegation comprising cabinet ministers.

Abdullah also said Malaysia would continue working closely with Thailand to enhance the significance of Asean for the good of the region.

He said Malaysia would co-operate with Thailand in ensuring peace and security in the wider East Asia region and the world.

The prime minister also said Malaysia was aware of the important constitutional development taking place in Thailand.

"As your friend and neighbour, we wish Thailand full success in carrying out the reforms it wishes to introduce for the good of the

people of Thailand."

Abdullah also said he looked forward to receiving both Surayud and his wife again at the end of the month to join in Malaysia's 50th independence anniversary celebrations.

"In addition, we shall also be celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and Thailand."

Surayud, in his speech, congratulated Malaysia for its achievements.

"Even the sky is not the limit for Malaysia," he said, referring to Malaysia's plans to send an astronaut to outer space this year.

He also said the Third Annual Consultation would continue to enhance bilateral ties between

Thailand and Malaysia for another 50 years.

Surayud, here on a three-day visit from yesterday, will meet Abdullah in Penang today for the annual consultation.

The two leaders will discuss issues of mutual interests to enhance bilateral ties, as well as confidence-building measures in southern Thailand which have been agreed to by the two leaders.

Earlier yesterday, Surayud had an audience with Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin and witnessed a signing ceremony between Malaysian and Thailand education ministers for co-operation in education. — Bernama