

Malaysia 'not a proxy of Russia'

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Shabery: Both countries just enjoy good ties

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia should not be seen as a proxy for Russia just because the two countries enjoy good relations in many areas, said Foreign Ministry parliamentary secretary Ahmad Shabery Cheek.

He said the existence of several joint programmes involving the two countries should not lead to that kind of impression.

"We believe that Russia's desire to forge closer ties with us is something good," he told Senator Dr Mohd Puad Zarkashi at the Dewan Negara.

Dr Mohd Puad wanted to know whether Russian-Malaysian relations were evolving along the lines of United States-Singapore ties, which may have triggered some sort of competition between the two



Shabery: 'Petronas one of the biggest investors in Russia'

South-East Asian countries, especially in defence.

Citing Russian-Malaysian cooperation in the astronaut programme, Ahmad Shabery said it was part of a

deal to procure Russian Sukhoi fighter jets, stressing that this did not make Malaysia a proxy of Russia.

Earlier, when responding to Senator Datuk Yaakob Mohamad, he said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's visit to Russia from June 18 to 20 had succeeded in enhancing relations between the two countries, especially in economy and trade.

He said this was exemplified by Petronas' US\$1.1bil (RM3.8bil) investment in Russia's oil and gas industry, making the Malaysian oil corporation one of the biggest investors there.

Malaysia has bought 16 MiG29 and 18 Sukhoi SU30MKM planes from Russia to beef up the Royal Malaysian Air Force. — Bernama