

Singapore Overtakes China As Malaysia's Largest Trading Partner, Says Muhyiddin Bernama

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By Tengku Noor Shamsiah Tengku Abdullah

SINGAPORE, Oct 25 (Bernama) -- Singapore overtook China as Malaysia's largest trading partner last year, an indication of how trade has expanded between the two neighbours, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said Tuesday. "I am happy to announce that now Singapore is our largest trading partner overtaking China last year. So, that is a very strong indication how (bilateral) trade has expanded. "Of course, Singapore is a very important investor for us. We did discuss just now about enhancing (bilateral) cooperation for small and medium enterprises (in Singapore) to possibly relocate to Johor," he told reporters after calling on his Singapore counterpart Teo Chee Hean. Muhyiddin and Teo also discussed various issues including education, tourism and current global economic climate. Muhyiddin said Teo also mentioned about the euro zone crisis and declining economic activities in the United States. "We are concerned about this trend and see whether it will impact our GDP (gross domestic product) growth for this year and next year.

Muhyiddin said there were still a lot of uncertainties there (in the United States and Europe) but "we believe the need for us to work closely together is important."

"Malaysia has forecast a reasonable growth for this year and next year. We believe enhancing existing cooperation with Singapore, with the region and with Asean (countries) will be a great help.

"Besides domestic direct investments, foreign direct investments are also an important aspect that we need to look at," said

Muhyiddin, who is here on a two-day official visit.

Muhyiddin will also call on Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and hold a bilateral meeting with Singapore Education Minister Heng Swee Keat this afternoon. Muhyiddin is also Education Minister.

The Deputy Prime Minister is accompanied by his wife, Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman, Deputy Minister of Housing and Local Government Datuk Seri Lajim Ukin, Deputy Minister of Tourism Datuk Dr James Dawos Mamit and senior foreign ministry officials.

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