

Muhyiddin begins visit to Indonesia

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CEMENTING TIES: DPM's visit part of continuous engagement with top leaders

JAKARTA: THE deputy prime minister's working visit to Jakarta couldn't have been better timed as the relationship between both countries is once again being tested.

Hot on the heels of the North Sumatra Mandailing community's Tor Tor dance and Gordang Sambilan issue that had a group of hard-liners in this nation of over 250 million people accusing Malaysia of yet again hijacking their heritage, many are hopeful that the visit by Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin will serve to identify and manage issues which stem from misunderstandings.

The ultimate aim is to end the simmering undercurrents of ill-perception that some Indonesians have towards Malaysians generally.

Accompanied by senior politicians from Umno, Muhyiddin, who is also Umno deputy president, is on a one-day working visit to this capital with a full day lined up with meetings with representatives of Indonesia's three main political parties.

The highlight of his meetings is expected to be with Indonesian Vice-President Boediono.

He is also expected to have separate sit-down sessions with Anas Urbaningrum, Aburizal Bakrie and Megawati Soekarnoputeri, leaders of Democrat, Golkar and Democratic Party of Struggle parties.

Muhyiddin will be accompanied by Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, secretary-general Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor as well as chiefs of the party's three wings.

Malaysian Ambassador to Indonesia Datuk Syed Munshe Afdzaruddin Syed Hassan said the meetings to be held at the highest political levels were critical in ensuring continuous engagements, that were backed by a strong political will.

Tomorrow, Muhyiddin will attend the Seventh Asean Education Ministers Meeting in Yogyakarta.

He will then leave for Bali, where he is expected to meet the governor as well as attend a briefing by the Bali Tourism Authority.

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