

DPM's Working Visit To UK Strengthens Existing Ties
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From Abdul Aziz Harun

LONDON, Sept 13 (Bernama) -- The five-day working visit by Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin to United Kingdom (UK), which came about two months after the visit by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak here, have bolstered bilateral ties between both nations that have existed for so long.

Every function attended by Muhyiddin since his arrival earlier in the week had achieved the objectives of his visit, beginning with his meetings with captains of industries in the UK, with his UK counterpart Nick Clegg, his visit to the vocational college right up to the dialogue sessions that he attended.

The meeting with Clegg on Tuesday had highlighted the cordial relations between the two leaders, which formed an important ingredient in fostering and enhancing understanding between the two countries.

Muhyiddin said that having close and special relations with the UK certainly had its advantages as it could open up wider access for Malaysia to expand ties with other nations in the region.

"UK is not only a developed nation, but it also has a much clearer influence on the other countries in this region, so it is certainly advantageous if we have cordial relations (with UK)," he told Malaysian journalists here on the last day of his working visit to the UK, Thursday.

In terms of bilateral trade relations, he said the meeting with industry leaders in UK had given him an opportunity to explain to them more clearly on Malaysia's keenness to see improved trade and investment relations between both countries.

He said the response he received at the meetings was most encouraging when some of them voiced their determination to expand their business and investments in Malaysia.

The meetings also saw the representative from the University of Reading praising the move by Malaysia to implement the Malaysia Education Blueprint (PPPM) which was perceived as being capable of churning out more outstanding students to fill up the institutions of higher learning.

Referring to the visit to Westminster Kingsway College, Muhyiddin said he had instructed the Director-General of Education to initiate follow-up action to study how the vocational field was developed in the UK as a comparison.

From the beginning of his working visit, the Deputy Prime Minister had voiced Malaysia's aspiration to see if the UK could give its cooperation by sending language teachers to bolster command of the English language among English language teachers in Malaysia.

Every dialogue session and forum saw Muhyiddin fielding questions on political developments in Malaysia and the economy, PPPM, the country's stand on the conflicts in the Middle East, as well as on patriotism.

He said that what had impressed him most was the fact that at every meeting, especially with the Malaysian community here, they had demonstrated their feelings of patriotism which, according to him, was more apparent when they were abroad.

He said that to these people, national pride was not only measured through the economy or education alone, but also in terms of its success to emerge as a nation that enjoyed harmony between the various races living in the country.

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