

Ahmad Zahid Receives Courtesy Visit From Somalian DPM

KUALA LUMPUR, March 14 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today received a courtesy call from his Somalian counterpart, Mohamed Omer Arteh, at his office in Parliament building, here.

At the half-hour meeting, both leaders discussed various matters related to Malaysia-Somalia ties.

According to a statement issued by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, the meeting breathed new life and further strengthened bilateral relations between the two countries in the areas of trade, investment, defence and education.

Besides that, both leaders were also expected to discuss regional and international issues of common interest to both countries, it said.

Mohamed Omer is on a personal working visit to Malaysia from March 9 until tomorrow. This is also his first visit to Malaysia since being appointed as Somalia's deputy prime minister in February 2015.

Trade between Malaysia and Somalia was recorded at RM344 million last year involving export of machinery, items and equipment, metals, electrical and electronic goods, chemicals, timber products, minerals, iron, steel and petroleum.

There are also 1,531 Somalian students studying in Malaysia, with 715 of them enrolled at public universities and 816 at private institutions of higher education.

Meanwhile, 16 Somalian officers are participating in the Malaysia Technical Cooperation Programme since 2016.

In a separate statement, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office said Malaysia would be channelling humanitarian aid such as food and medicines to Somalia through non-governmental organisations and political parties in this country.

Malaysia is also prepared to cooperate with the World Food Programme of the United Nations in assisting Somalia deal with its food crisis following the drought problem in that country since three years ago.

"Malaysia will also consider providing micro credit assistance to the hardcore poor and low-income group in that country," the statement said.

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