

Philippine President Duterte meets with Mahathir

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16/07/2018

PUTRAJAYA, July 16 (Bernama) -- Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte met with Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad today at the latter's office in Perdana Putra here.

Duterte, who was accompanied by Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Alan Peter S. Cayetano and Philippine Ambassador to Malaysia Charles C. Jose and National Security Adviser Hermogenes C. Esperon Jr, was welcomed by Dr Mahathir upon arrival at Perdana Putra at 3 pm today.

They met for about an hour. Also present were Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah, Malaysian Defence Minister Mohamad Sabu and Chief of Defence Forces, Gen Tan Sri Zulkifli Zainal Abidin.

In a statement in conjunction with Duterte's visit, Prime Minister Office's said the call today was held in a warm and constructive atmosphere symbolising the close ties shared by Malaysia and The Philippines.

The statement said both Duterte and Dr Mahathir were pleased with the current state of bilateral relations between both countries which was described as at its best level.

"It further served as an avenue for both leaders to discuss a wide range of bilateral cooperation particularly on defence and security, regional and global issues of common interest.

"Both leaders were pleased with the commitment shown by both countries to curb the spread of extremism and terrorism in the region.

"Malaysia has also expressed support towards peace and development in Mindanao in the southern Philippines," said the statement.

Duterte arrived in Malaysia on Saturday.

Duterte also presented Dr Mahathir a portrait of the Prime Minister as a memento to mark the visit.

Yesterday, Duterte had witnessed the "Fight of the Champions" for the World Boxing Association (WBA) welterweight title between Manny Pacquiao of the Philippines and Lucas Matthyse of Argentina in Kuala Lumpur.

The historic boxing match between Philippine boxing great Manny Pacquiao and Argentinean World Boxing Association (WBA) welterweight champion Lucas Matthyse was held at the Axiata Arena, Bukit Jalil.

Pacquiao stunned defending champion Matthyse to become the new WBA welterweight champion.

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