

## **Malaysia consistent in its support for Timor Leste to join ASEAN**

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KUALA LUMPUR, July 11 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is always consistent in its support for the admission of Timor Leste as a new member in ASEAN since the country is located in the Southeast Asia region.

Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah said he had also reiterated Malaysia's support for Timor Leste to join ASEAN when he met his Timor Leste counterpart Dr Dionisio da Costa Babo Soares, who was in Putrajaya for a visit last July 1 and 2.

"I informed him that Malaysia is always consistent in its stand to support Timor Leste's admission into ASEAN ever since the republic submitted its application in 2011.

"The Timor Leste Foreign Minister expressed his appreciation for Malaysia's support and also informed of the republic's progress in fulfilling the requirements to be an ASEAN member," he told Parliament today.

He was responding to a question by Wong Hon Wai (PH-Bukit Bendera) on whether Malaysia would support Timor Leste's admission as the 11th member country in ASEAN.

Saifuddin said ASEAN did not set the time period for Timor Leste's admission into ASEAN, but ASEAN member countries had agreed to hold a fact-finding mission on the republic's readiness to be an ASEAN member.

The fact-finding mission will begin in September and Malaysia is hopeful that the finding will be positive, hence making it possible for Timor Leste to join ASEAN soon, he added.

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