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## Education remains a pillar of M'sia-UK ties - Envoy

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**LONDON:** The education sector will continue to be one of the main pillars of relations between Malaysia and the United Kingdom (UK), said Malaysia's High Commissioner to the UK and Northern Ireland, Datuk Zakri Jaafar.

He said Malaysia currently ranks as the eighth highest source of international students pursuing higher education in the UK, with a total of 13,005 students.

"At the same time, there are more than 50 schools and five UK universities operating in Malaysia," he said in his speech at a dinner with Malaysians in the UK, hosted by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, who is also Minister of Energy Transition and Water Transformation, at the High Commission of Malaysia in London on Friday.

Some 80 people attended the event, comprising students, representatives from government-linked companies, and staff of the Malaysian High Commission in London.

Also present were Fadillah's wife, Datin Seri Ruziah Mohd Tahir; Chief New Energy Officer of Tenaga Nasional Berhad, Mohd Zarihi Mohd Hashim; Sarawak Energy Berhad Group Chief Executive Officer Datuk Sharbini Suhaili; and delegates from the Ministry of Energy Transition and Water Transformation

(PETRA).

The Deputy Prime Minister, who arrived here from Türkiye on Wednesday for a three-day working visit, earlier had performed Friday prayers with the Malaysian Muslim community at Malaysia Hall.

During his visit, Fadillah led the Malaysian delegation to the Summit of the Future of Energy Security held at Lancaster House, which took place over two days starting Thursday.

Zakri also noted that Malaysia and the UK have maintained close cooperation in the defence sector, particularly through the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA), which include joint military exercises, defence industry collaboration, procurement, and technology exchange.

In terms of tourism, a total of 315,980 visitors from the UK were recorded arriving in Malaysia in 2024, compared to 272,297 in 2023 and 134,667 the year before. This number is expected to continue rising in 2025 following the resumption of British Airways' flight services to Kuala Lumpur.

Zakri added that the working visit by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to the UK earlier this year is proof of the strong ties between both nations, not only on a bilateral basis but also through various fora such as the Commonwealth and the United Nations (UN). — Bernama