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Mahathir - depot

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SUBANG, July 6, (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Malaysia planned to set up a depot at Valparaiso, Chile for distribution of Malaysian goods to countries in South America.

He said a feasibility study on the depot had been carried out.

The depot could also serve as the centre for goods from South American countries bound for Malaysia, he told reporters on his return from a three-week visit to Chile, Brazil and Argentina at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport here.

He said a similar depot would also be set up here for goods from South America for distribution in the country or countries in the region.

According to him, Valparaiso is connected to Argentina by roads through the Andes range.

For example, a crane made in Mendoza, a town about 1,000km from the capital of Argentina, Buenos Aires, could be assembled at Valparaiso before being shipped to Malaysia, he said. --more.

♥06/07/10-10MST

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Mahathir - depot 2 Subang

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said however that it would be nearer for goods to be exported to and imported from Brazil via the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa than Valparaiso.

He said countries in South America were generally very interested in having close ties with Malaysia in aviation and shipping.

The visit to South America had achieved its objective + ... where we were well received and arrangements made to meet officers, ministers and the three presidents, namely Patricio Alwyn (Chile), Fernando Collor de Mello (Brazil) and Carlos Saul Menem (Argentina),+ he said.

+They also supported Malaysia's stand on various issues, including on the environment, and our views on world free trade,+ he said.

He was there was potential for air and sea cargo services between Malaysia and the countries concerned.

+Their potential depends on our promotion. Initially not many people will make use of the services. If we intensify our promotion, I am confident, the volume will increase,+ he said. -- more

♥06/07/10-59MST

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Mahathir - depot 3 Subang

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said an in-depth study would be carried out on aviation and shipping between Malaysia and the countries concerned.

He also said that Fiji had agreed to a Malaysian proposal for that country to be used as a stopover for its flag carrier. It had agreed for fifth freedom flights, which would allow for passengers to be ferried from Fiji to South America and here.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, who was present at the press conference, said Chile had agreed to grant Malaysia third and fourth freedom flights out of that country.

He said efforts were being made to obtain landing rights for Malaysia Airlines (MAS) in Argentina.

Meanwhile, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said nine trade agreements were signed between Malaysian businessmen and their South American counterparts during the visit.

Three agreements were signed with Chile, four with Brazil and two with Argentina.

She said Malaysia also signed two agreements with Argentina, one pertaining to investments and the other on avoidance of double taxation. --
Bernama

♥06/07/11-30MST