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Argentine-Visit

ARGENTINE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO BOLSTER TRADE TIES

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 21 (Bernama) -- Argentine President Carlos Menem's three-day visit to Malaysia beginning tomorrow is part of a wider effort to increase trade and investment ties with Malaysia and other Asian countries.

Menem, who recently visited Japan, China and the Philippines, will be leading some 50 Argentine executives of companies operating in sectors ranging from agro-industry to steel.

The Argentine embassy here describes the current status of bilateral relations as "buoyant".

A bilateral agreement on air transportation and several memoranda of understanding, including on tourism cooperation, are expected to be signed during Menem's visit.

Argentine companies will be looking at the markets for wheat, canned foods, fresh fruits and vegetables, fish and pharmaceutical products in Malaysia.

In 1995, Argentina exported US\$257.7 million (about RM642 million) worth of goods to Malaysia.

One of the highlights of Menem's visit will be a seminar on relations between Asean and the South American Mercosur common market.

Delegates from Asean countries will discuss the prospects of closer relations with Mercosur which groups Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Menem is also scheduled to take part in a business seminar while his Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella is expected to preside at a meeting of Argentina's diplomats to Southeast Asia and business leaders.

After arrival tomorrow, Menem is scheduled to have an audience with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Najihah at Istana Negara.

The Argentine President will hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Friday.

Menem will be conferred an honorary Degree of Law by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

He will leave for Bali in Indonesia on Saturday. -- BERNAMA

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