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Mahathir-meetings

EUROPEAN LEADERS SEEK BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH DR MAHATHIR

BANGKOK, Feb 28 (Bernama) -- Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany is among three European leaders who have requested to hold bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the sideline of the historic Asia-Europe meeting (Asem) beginning here on Friday.

The meeting with Kohl is tentatively scheduled for tomorrow evening, shortly after Dr Mahathir's arrival here for the two-day summit, Foreign Ministry Secretary-General Tan Sri Ahmad Kamil Jaafar told Malaysian journalists tonight.

Dr Mahathir is also expected to meet Austrian Chancellor Dr Franz Vranitzky and Prime Minister of Ireland John Bruton, both on Saturday.

Apart from the European leaders, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong also requested to meet Dr Mahathir, said Ahmad Kamil. The meeting is also scheduled for Saturday.

Asem will see the gathering of leaders from 10 Asian countries and the 15 members of the European Union (EU).

The 10 Asian countries are the Asean seven, China, Japan and South Korea. Four of the European heads of government -- from Sweden, Spain, Denmark and Greece -- will not be able to make it because of their domestic situation.

The historic summit will aim at fostering deeper relationship between the two regions in the political, economic and cultural fields, he said.

Ahmad Kamil also said he would be meeting his Thai counterpart, Thep Devakula, during the next few days to seek an early solution to problems relating to the construction of a wall at the common border in Perlis. -- Bernama

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