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Mahathir-Ramos

RAMOS, MAHATHIR TO HOLD TALKS IN TOKYO

MANILA, May 16 (Bernama) -- President Fidel Ramos and Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will hold talks tomorrow when they attend a conference on Asia in Tokyo.

The talks, to be attended by senior Filipino and Malaysian officials, will tackle regional and multilateral issues, Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon said in a statement.

Siazon, who will accompany Ramos, said the Tokyo meeting coincides with an international conference on the Future of Asia where both Asean leaders are keynote speakers.

The conference, hosted by Japan's leading business daily Nihon Keizai Shimbun, seeks to foster an exchange of views on international issues between Japan and its Asian neighbours.

Siazon said the Ramos-Mahathir meeting in Tokyo is in line with their 1993 agreement to hold informal talks to boost bilateral relations between the Philippines and Malaysia.

"The discussion is also expected to focus on renewing Asean commitment to security and development cooperation, including Philippines-Malaysia trade concerns," he said.

Aside from Ramos and Dr Mahathir, other Asean conference speakers are Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Indonesian Research and Technology Minister Habibie.

US Assistant State Secretary Winston Lord, Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda and China's State Planning Commission vice chairman Ye Qing will also address the event. -- BERNAMA

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