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G-15

KEY DECISIONS EXPECTED AT G-15 RETREAT

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VICTORIA FALLS (Zimbabwe), Nov 5 (Bernama) -- Leaders of the Group of 15 developing countries (G-15) are expected to decide on the future direction and role of the six-year grouping during their retreat here Tuesday.

Six heads of state or government and vice-presidents' of the grouping arrived at this scenic resort Monday for an overnight stay at Elephant Hill Resort where they are to continue their deliberations in an informal atmosphere and without their officials.

A 10-minute drive away from the resort is the world's highest waterfall, the Victoria Falls.

Except for President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, who left for home last night after the plenary session, the others -- Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia of Algeria, Prime Minister Deve Gowda of India, Prime Minister P.Patterson of Jamaica, Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister Habib Thiam of Senegal and host President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe are at the retreat.

The two vice-presidents are Dr Carlos Ruckauf of Argentina and Marco Marciel of Brazil.

Malaysian officials said the talks of these leaders were mainly on political matters of the grouping.

Other decisions expected are the new members to be admitted into the grouping and the frequency of the summit which is an annual affair at present.

On Saturday, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the new members could come from Central Asia and the Far East.

He also did not rule out countries from the Middle East and the poorer nations of Europe.

Dr Mahathir and the other leaders will return to Harare later Tuesday to close their three-day summit. -- BERNAMA

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