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MALAYSIA-HONG KONG BUSINESS TIES BENEFICIAL

KUALA LUMPUR, May 15 (Bernama) -- Building strategic partnership with Hong Kong businessmen for mutual benefits would be of added advantage to local investors, said IOI Tan Sri Lee Shin Cheng, group executive chairman of IOI Corporation Bhd said.

He said Hong Kong businessmen's advance expertise in areas of construction and finance would contribute to "our drive towards increased efficiency and productivity."

"We are located in the same region, hence smart partnership can be established to venture into other growing Asean countries," he told Bernama here today.

"For a start, such a meeting will enable us to get to know each other well," Lee added. Some 60 Hong Kong captains of the industry led by Financial Secretary of Hong Kong, Donald Tsang are here to strengthen business ties with local businessmen.

"Malaysia's vibrant economic growth is attracting Hong Kong businessmen to establish business joint ventures with locals," he said.

Lee also said Malaysian businessmen should emulate the approach of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad whom he (Lee) dubbed as "super salesman," for his untiringly effort to scout for business opportunities all over the world.

The director of the Hong Kong Centre for Economic Research, Prof Richard Wong said strategic partnership meant identifying projects which could be undertaken jointly.

"These projects can be undertaken on a complementary approach by sharing technical and management know-how and financing with different partners who have knowledge of the various markets in the region," he said.

Prof Wong said Malaysia had enormous advantage such as the capability to develop its natural resources, to expand its manufacturing sector, to move into neighbouring countries such as China and to attract foreign capital.

"Hence, Malaysian businessmen can team-up with Hong Kong businessmen to forge strategic partnership," he said.

Prof Wong said the initial response to the idea of strategic partnership was positive, based on the large number of Malaysian businessmen who turned out at the seminar.

Earlier, Tsang, the financial secretary of Hong Kong in his opening address, said the success story of the Malaysian economy and its vibrant growth was the envy of all.

He said the aim of the visit was to build the "bridge of friendship" and to sow business opportunities.

Tsang said the time had come for Hong Kong service providers to spread their wings to expand into regional markets.

"We come here to work with Malaysian businessmen and share our expertise, not to compete," he said.

Tsang is leading a delegation of top professionals from Hong Kong's property development, construction and engineering sectors. The seminar was attended by about 200 top Malaysian executives. -- BERNAMA

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