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Embassy (With pix)

MALAYSIA TO OPEN ITS EMBASSY IN GUINEA SOON, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Malaysia is making arrangements to open its embassy in Conakry to further enhance relations with Guinea, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

He said that the move to open the embassy was approved by the Cabinet recently and this had been conveyed to Guinea's President Lansana Conte through its Natural Resources and Energy Minister, Fassine Fofana, who is on a visit here.

"The embassy will be opened soon and we are identifying the candidate to be appointed as ambassador to that country," he told reporters after a meeting with Fofana at Wisma Putra here.

Abdullah said that the decision to set up the embassy was made by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during a visit to Guinea last month.

Guinea set up its embassy here recently. It will be opened by Fofana tonight.

On the meeting with Fofana, Abdullah said that they discussed, among other things, the follow-up of projects jointly planned during Dr Mahathir's visit to Guinea.

Among the projects to be embarked on are in the fields of power generation and telecommunications and in the hospitality and manufacturing industries.

Abdullah said Fofana also mentioned several new ventures to be embarked on by the Malaysian private sector in Guinea like in bauxite mining and pineapple cultivation.

He said that Fofana, who is responsible for Malaysia-Guinea cooperation, also said that Guinea was interested to establish cooperation with a local private firm involved in oil palm plantations to implement such a project in Guinea.

Fofana also expressed interest to set up an organisation like the Pilgrims Management and Fund Board here to handle pilgrimages to the holy land for its Muslim population, he said.

Abdullah said that Malaysia, through the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department, would train government officers from Guinea on the implementation of projects under the bilateral cooperation. Officers from Guinea would also be provided training at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign relations here, he added.

Guinea, a former French colony in Africa, has a population of seven million.

-- BERNAMA

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