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MANILA DIALOGUE TO STRENGTHEN MALAYSIA-PHILIPPINES PARTNERSHIP

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- The Manila Dialogue which will be held from Nov 23 to Nov 25 in the Philippines prior to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) heads of governments meeting will focus on strengthening Malaysia-Philippines partnership.

Besides this, it would endeavour to enhance business and economic cooperation, as well as encourage more joint-ventures and strategic investments between entrepreneurs from both countries, said the chairman of Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC) Malaysia, Tan Sri Basir Ismail.

He said this during a signing ceremony between sponsors of the Dialogue and organisers, The Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI) and PBEC, here today.

The sponsors for the Dialogue are Sime Darby Bhd, Renong Bhd, Metroplex Bhd, MBf Group, Leader Universal Holdings Bhd, Waterfront Group and Berjaya/Cosway Philippines Inc.

In conjunction with the event, to be officiated by Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, is the launching of the Philippines-Malaysia Business Council.

He said both Malaysian and the Philippine governments have high expectations of the ability of the two councils to promote greater awareness and forge a more open and meaningful partnership between the public and private sectors concerning the vast potential which exist in the areas of commerce, trade investment and tourism.

"There are lot of opportunities that we should take advantage of, especially down south (of the Philippines)," Basir said.

Malaysia is one of the largest investors and the Philippines Board of Investments had already approved RM482.5 million worth of investments.

The Dialogue will include speakers Tun Daim Zainuddin, economic adviser to the government and also Encik Roberto R. Romulo, the former secretary of foreign affairs, Philippines.

The Malaysian private sector will see the representation of executive chairman of Renong, Tan Sri Halim Saad, chairman of DRB-Hicom Group, Tan Sri Yahaya Ahmad and group chief executive of Sime Darby Bhd, Datuk Nik Mohamad Nik Yaacob.-- BERNAMA

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