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ASEAN FOREIGN/ECONOMIC MINISTERS TO PREPARE FOR INFORMAL SUMMMIT

PETALING JAYA, Oct 14 (Bernama) -- Asean foreign affairs and economic ministers will meet this Friday to prepare the agenda for the second informal summit to be held in Kuala Lumpur on December 14.

An Asean trade official said today the joint committee meeting, to be chaired by Asean Secretary-General Datuk Ajit Singh, would finalise details on issues the nine Asean leaders might want to discuss when they meet at the Mines Resort.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would play host to his Asean counterparts at the summit which is expected to consider, among other things, the adverse impact of currency speculation on regional economies.

The informal summit, which was first held at Jakarta last year, was borne out of a need for South-east Asian leaders to meet more often rather than meeting only every three years during their formal summit.

This was decided at the Bangkok summit in 1995, where leaders decided that the speeding up of regional integration on all fronts and the inclusion of new members warranted more meetings at the highest level possible, the official said. -- BERNAMA

MR AAM