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## British interest in Malaysia not jaded by crises

Joseph Bingkasan in London

ASIAN Strategy and Leadership Institute president Mirzan Mahathir described the 'Malaysia-British Partnership: The London Dialogue' held here on Tuesday as a success.

There was clear enthusiasm from the British participants throughout the day-long dialogue, he said.

"Speaker after speaker showed that they were keen on Malaysia. They believed that the fundamentals of the country are intact," he said after the dialogue.

The dialogue was jointly organised by the Asli, Asia House and the Commonwealth Studies Centre at Cambridge University. Standard Chartered Bank was the main sponsor for the event held at the Queen Elizabeth 11 Conference Centre.

Mirzan said the British speakers were also urging their countrymen to look at Malaysia for long term partnerships.

He said the fact that the dialogue received encouraging participation was an indication that Malaysia's recent economic situation had not deterred British interests from seeking investment in the country.

He believed that the encouraging response to the dialogue was an overflow of an earlier business seminar hosted by International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz in Birmingham on Oct 6.

The Birmingham seminar was themed 'Malaysia: Your Profit Centre in Asia'.

"Given the economic situation in the country now, I thought that they (British) were taking a 'wait and see' stand...but no, there was no decline in their interest in investment in Malaysia."

He also said partnership investments in the field of education and information technology had great growth potential.

Asked whether Asli was planning to organise more such dialogues in the near future, he said: "In the pipeline is a similar dialogue in Ottawa, Canada just before the Apec meeting next month."

He said the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, is expected to address the Ottawa Dialogue.

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