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Gujral-Asean

INDIAN PM TO ATTEND KL ASEAN MEETINGS

By: Mahesh Prasad

NEW DELHI, July 10 (Bernama) -- Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral, who is also the Foreign Minister, is scheduled to attend two Asean-related meetings in Kuala Lumpur later this month.

Foreign ministry sources said today Gujral's decision to attend the meetings signalled the importance India attached to the booming Asean economies as part of its "Look East" policy.

Gujral is scheduled to attend both the Asean Ministerial Meeting on July 24-25 and the Asian Regional Forum (ARF) on July 27.

The sources said he would also hold talks with his Malaysian counterpart Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to enhance Indo-Malaysia ties.

The visit would also provide Gujral the opportunity to meet foreign ministers from 17 countries -- seven members of Asean and 10 Asean dialogue partners.

They include Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeni Primakov and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

Asean groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam.

Gujral attended last year's ARF and Asean post-ministerial meetings in his capacity as Foreign Minister in the then Deve Gowda government.--

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