

04 AUG 1997

Lesotho-investment (with pix)

LESOTHO EXPECTING SEVERAL M'SIAN BUSINESS MISSIONS SOON

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 4 (Bernama) -- Lesotho deputy prime minister Prof Pakalitha Mosisili, who ended a four-day official visit to Malaysia today, said several Malaysian companies and agencies have shown interest in setting up joint ventures there.

For that purpose a Felcra delegation, among others, is scheduled to visit Lesotho in a fortnight, he told reporters here.

Mosisili said the Felcra delegation would explore joint ventures in land management, agriculture, agro-business and fisheries.

He said, the second national car manufacturer, Perusahaan Otomobil Kedua Sdn Bhd (Perodua) has also been invited to look into the possibility of setting up an assembly or manufacturing plant in Lesotho.

Lesotho, a former British protectorate, has the second highest literacy rate in Africa of 75 per cent of its English-speaking population of two million, he said.

Mosisili, who held discussions with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last Friday, said Dr Mahathir offered to help Lesotho in human resources development under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme.

Lesotho, dubbed the "Switzerland of Africa" for its snow-capped mountains, is completely surrounded by South Africa.

"This is an opportunity we can make full use of...It will help us a lot in managing our public administration system," he said.

Mosisili was optimistic that his visit would pave the way for smart partnerships between Lesotho and the Malaysian business community.

While here, Mosisili and five ministers in his entourage also held talks with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and visited the Malaysian Technology Park, the new federal administrative capital at Putrajaya, University Putra Malaysia in Serdang and the Perodua plant in Serendah.

Mosisili had earlier attended the three-day 1997 Langkawi International Dialogue last week.

At the press conference, Lesotho foreign minister Kelebone A. Maope announced the appointment of Malaysian economist Hisham Datuk Zainal as the economic adviser to the Lesotho government.

"His role is to assist in promoting economic growth through planning and implementation of privatisation programmes," he said.

British-trained Hisham told reporters that he would work towards creating opportunities for foreign investors and help enhance trade and investment ties between Malaysia and Lesotho, both members of the Commonwealth. -- BERNAMA

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