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Mahathir in Tokyo

Kamarul Yunus in Tokyo

TOKYO, Thurs: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to witness the signing of a joint venture agreement between Metro Denso Co Ltd of Japan and two Malaysian companies - USRA Tampi Sdn Bhd and Premier Choice Sdn Bhd tomorrow.

Malaysian Ambassador to Japan, Tan Sri H.M. Khatib said the joint venture agreement is for the development of electronic spare parts such as combination switch, light, wiper, heater switch, electronic devices and power window switch.

During the signing, Premier Choice will be represented by its chairman Datuk Mohd Saleh Sulong, while USRA Tampi and Metro Denso will be represented by Group executive chairman Datuk Abdul Shukor Mohamed and president M. Tanaka respectively.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived here today, is on a three-day working visit, after participating in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) leaders' summit in Vancouver, Canada.

The Prime Minister is also expected to be interviewed by a Japanese television network, Nihon Keize Shimbun tomorrow.

Khatib, who briefed Malaysian reporters covering Dr Mahathir's visit, said the interview will cover, among other things, Malaysia's handling of its currency and share market problems, national economic programmes and Dr Mahathir's leadership of Umno.

Dr Mahathir will also hold a dialogue with some 30 key Japanese businessmen later in the afternoon.

Khatib said they include presidents and chief executive officers of Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Matsushita, NTT, Daiwa Bank, Yamaichi Research Institute and Kobe Steel.

Prior to the dialogue, Dr Mahathir will also meet behind close-door with five members of the Japanese Wisemen Club, made up of Japan's top corporate leaders.

It will be Dr Mahathir's fifth meeting with the club members.

Khatib said Dr Mahathir's final function during his working visit is to receive Japan's former vice-minister for international finance Toyoo Goyhten, who is now president of the Financial Affairs Institute.

Dr Mahathir will depart for Kuala Lumpur on Saturday.

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