

24/11/1997

Private-sector `salute to Asean'

Chok Suat Ling

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - A private-sector "salute to Asean" will be held at Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel from Dec 13 to 16 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the regional grouping.

Held in conjunction with the Asean Informal Heads of Government meeting, the business forum will bring together captains of industry and Asean heads of government and other ministers.

They will discuss key issues and concerns relevant to the region.

Opening day will include a keynote address on the "Future of Asean" by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

A dialogue with Dr Mahathir will also be held along with an address by Asean secretary-general Datuk Ajit Singh.

The programmes include a special Asean Economic Minister's Roundtable on "Asean 2020" and a CEO panel on "Entrepreneurship Challenges in Asean". There will also be a panel discussion of Asean foreign ministers on "Future of Asean Political Strategies and Regional Security Issues".

Other discussions are on topics like "The Greater Mekong Subregion - Myths, Realities and Opportunities", Asean economic co-operation, and the future of Asean tourism.

The four-day forum will close with a panel discussion.

Invited speakers are Philippine President Fidel Ramos, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, Thailand's Prime Minister Chuan Leepkai, Indonesia's Foreign Minister Dr Ali Alatas, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, and Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamad.

Asean secretary-general elect Rodolfo Severino Jr will make a special presentation on "Asean Into the Future" on the last day.

The event is a joint initiative by the Brooker Group of Bangkok and the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute of Kuala Lumpur. It is supported by the Asean Secretariat, the Asean Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Asean Tourism Association and the US/Asean Business Council.

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