

30 OCT 1997

G15-Indonesia

STEP UP EXPORTS TO MALAYSIA, CALL TO INDON ENTREPRENEURS

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 30 (Bernama) -- Indonesian entrepreneurs should take advantage of the various opportunities and step up exports to Malaysia, the republic's Trade Attache here Ferry Yahya said today.

"Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's recent statement that the depreciation of the ringgit and other currencies in the Asean region provided wide opportunities for Indonesian products to enter the Malaysian market, merited serious attention," he told reporters after the G15 trade and economic senior officials preparatory meeting here.

Ferry said Indonesian entrepreneurs should grasp this opportunity because Malaysia wished to import goods from countries whose currencies were cheaper than the US dollar.

He said: "As for us, Malaysia is still a big market. For instance, we account only 10 per cent of Malaysia's requirements for newsprint whereas Malaysia imported US\$1 billion worth of such material annually."

He said that in the last five years, Indonesia's main exports to Malaysia were office equipment, newsprint, textiles, fish and other marine based products as well as clothing.

Ferry said Indonesia could also export chemical and food products to Malaysia and import from Malaysia items such as machinery and other capital goods, foodstuffs as well as information technology (IT) materials as Malaysia was currently promoting and building its IT infrastructure with the development of the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

The Director-General of the Foreign Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affaris, Soemardi Brotodiningrat said his country had never rejected foreign capital.

"However we have to study it carefully and consider its effects on our national development," he told reporters.

On today's meeting, he said the officials were briefed on the agenda for tomorrow's meetings by the host nation.

He said the agenda included items on trade cooperation, private sector involvement in development and multilateral cooperation. -- BERNAMA

ZAB AAM