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RAFIDAH-APEC

APEC REPRESENTS PLATFORM FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT, RAFIDAH SAYS

KUALA LUMPUR, June 25 (Bernama) -- Malaysia would like to see APEC being used by everyone to open up markets for mutual benefit, international trade and industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said today.

Speaking to reporters after the official opening of the "SMI Showcase 1998" by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad here, she said, "We do not want to use APEC as a battering ram to open up the economies of other countries. Malaysia would not like to be in that position."

Rafidah also said all APEC member countries would like to see their markets being opened up as and when possible.

"Flexibility is very important as it would take care of everybody's interest. Nobody should therefore have the impression that we can use APEC to open up another country's market. It is not about that, APEC is about mutual benefits."

Speaking at the opening earlier, she said the success of cross-border linkages basically hinged upon the support of larger companies, especially multinational companies opening up opportunities for local small and medium industries (SMIs) to become competitive parts and components suppliers.

Due to the globalised operations of larger companies, the linkages between SMIs and multinational corporations (MNC's) would serve as springboard for Malaysian SMI companies to go global, she said.

She was confident that with the support provided by the MNC's network of operations throughout the world, globalisation could become a reality.

The minister advised MNCs to utilise local SMI companies for the production of high value-added parts components and services.

"The MNCs can concentrate upon the critical system integration, testing or production of proprietary components," she added.

She was also optimistic that cross-border links would encourage linkages of not only between large and small and medium companies but also among themselves. -- BERNAMA

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