

13 NOV 1998

APEC-NEWS-ESTRADA

M'SIA HAS YET TO CONFIRM MAHATHIR-ESTRADA MEETING

MANILA, Nov 13 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has yet to confirm Manila's request for a meeting between Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and President Joseph Estrada, an official said today.

Presidential spokesman Jerry Barican said the meeting was being arranged by foreign affairs officials to coincide with next week's Apec leaders' summit in Kuala Lumpur.

Estrada leaves on Monday for the Malaysian capital, his second overseas trip since he assumed office on June 30. The first was Singapore.

He will be accompanied by a 70-member delegation including Filipino industrialists keen in forging joint ventures with their Malaysian counterparts.

While in Malaysia, Estrada will address the Malaysia-Philippines Business Council and the US-Asean Business Council to expound on the Philippines' investment potentials.

He will also attend a gathering of the Filipino community in Kuala Lumpur.

Estrada's other bilateral meetings still to be confirmed are those with Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi, South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, Australian Prime Minister John Howard and Chilean President Eduardo Frei.

Confirmed so far were those with US President Bill Clinton and Chinese President Jiang Zemin.

Barican said Estrada will take up with Jiang China's alleged "creeping invasion" into the Philippine-claimed Mischief Reef in the South China Sea.

He will be interviewed by the Washington Post, New York Times, Financial Times, Asian Wall Street Journal and the Cable News Network (CNN).

-- BERNAMA

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