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Ethiopia-visit

ETHIOPIA SEES CLOSER TIES WITH MALAYSIA

By: Ahmad Zakiman Zain

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 24 (Bernama) -- Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, winding-up a five-day official visit to Malaysia, said it has laid the foundation for closer relations between the two countries.

He said the visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had been very rewarding and successful.

"This visit marks a turning point in Ethiopia-Malaysia relations... We covered a lot of ground on a number of issues of mutual interests," he said at a media conference at his hotel today.

He cited the three agreements on economic, scientific and technical cooperation, on trade promotion and protection of investment that were signed during his visit.

"Malaysia's development has been described by many as an Asian miracle and we have seen it and it has been made possible by the leaders of this country," he said.

Zenawi was accompanied by his Trade and Industry Minister Kasahaun Ayele, senior government officials and a 43-member business delegation for the visit -- his first to Malaysia.

The delegation also visited the Palm Oil Research Institute of Malaysia (PORIM), Standards and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia (Sirim), Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia (RRI), Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA) and the Felda scheme in Serting, Negeri Sembilan.

He said Ethiopia was keen to learn from Malaysia's experience in oil palm and rubber cultivation.

Landlocked Ethiopia, whose capital is Addis Ababa, borders Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia and Sudan.

Zenawi leaves for Seoul tomorrow morning.

-- BERNAMA

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