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YEN-LOAN

JAPANESE GOVT TO SEND MISSION TO DISCUSS LOAN REQUEST BY MALAYSIA

By: Azlina Aziz

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 22 (Bernama) -- The Japanese government will be sending a mission to Malaysia next week to discuss further the yen loan requested by the Malaysian government for local projects worth US\$1.8 billion.

Japanese minister of international trade and industry, Kaoru Yasano, said: "We received the feasibility studies of those projects end of last week and we will be sending a team to engage talks with Malaysian officials."

Speaking at a press conference here today, he said the talk would not be to reject or turn down the projects but aimed at reaching an agreement.

He said the objective of his visit to Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia was to explain to leaders of the region on Japan's policies on measures to revive its economy.

He said the recovery was important because Japan would be able to play its role in helping the region out of its current crisis, adding that Japan would continue to play its role and had a responsibility in helping the Asean economy.

On his meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Special Functions Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin today, Yasano said, the prime minister had described Japan as an engine growth for Asia.

Yasano said that Dr Mahathir had expressed strong expectation that Japan would play a part in providing support and help to achieve economic recovery in the region.

He said Dr Mahathir had also explained to him the capital control measures taken by Malaysia.

The policy taken was good for investors and that the Malaysian currency outside the country has been flowing back since the measures were taken, Dr Mahathir had pointed out, Yasano said.

"My impression is that this policy is an outcome of a painful decision made despite having considered the various situations carefully," Yasano said.

With regards to Apec, Yasano said it will be very important and he expects a very strong message will be sent out from this meeting for recovery in the Asia Pacific region.

Asked by reporters on the Early Voluntary Sectoral Liberalisation (EVSL) that would be discussed at the Apec meeting, he said: "If the EVSL resolution can be wrapped up, we are very happy about it, and even if it is not reached, then we will turn to the World Trade Organisation's negotiations."

On Japan's investment in the region, Yasano replied that it had healthy investments in the region. -- BERNAMA

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