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Asean-Arrival

MAHATHIR ARRIVES FOR ASEAN SUMMIT

By: Abdul Muin Abdul Majid

HANOI, Dec 14 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived here today to attend the Sixth Asean Summit beginning tomorrow amid talks of rejuvenating the region's economy ravaged by a 17-month old financial and economic woes.

He was accompanied by wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, who is here for a two-day visit, will call on Dr Mahathir later today.

The two leaders are expected to discuss Cambodia's efforts to gain entry into Asean at this summit.

Later Dr Mahathir is scheduled to call on his Vietnamese counterpart Phan Van Kai.

Khai will host an informal working dinner for the visiting Asean leaders tonight and sources said they would discuss Cambodia's admission into the nine-member grouping.

Dr Mahathir will also hold talks with Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong and Chinese Vice-President Hu Jintao.

The opening ceremony of the two-day summit will be held the Ba Dinh Hall.

Also scheduled to arrive today are Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei, Myanmar's Chairman of State Peace and Development Council Than Shwe, Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai, Philippine President Joseph Estrada, Indonesian President B.J.Habibie and Goh.

The leaders of three Asean dialogue partners -- China, Japan and South Korea

-- will arrive in Hanoi from tomorrow for meetings with Asean heads of state and government.

This is the first Asean Summit hosted by Vietnam which became a member of Asean in 1995.

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