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MAKE ASIA'S RECOVERY CORE OF APEC DISCUSSIONS

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 13 (Bernama) -- Measures for Asia's economic recovery should take precedence over discussions on tariff cuts at the ongoing Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) meetings here, Japanese officials said today.

The Apec forum should not be bogged down by negotiations on tariff cuts, Member of Parliament Yuchi Tani said after leading a nine-member Japanese delegation to call on Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the chair for next week's Apec summit.

Tani said they came to Malaysia primarily to express their concern on the matter to the Prime Minister.

"The most important issue to be discussed in Apec is the recovery of the Asian economy. That was why we asked Dr Mahathir to concentrate on this issue and bring Asia out of the economic crisis," he said.

He said Dr Mahathir totally agreed with their view and told them that the United States should not interfere with Japan's US\$30 billion aid package for crisis-hit Asian countries.

"Japan has a big responsibility to take Asia out of the crisis," he quoted Dr Mahathir as telling the delegation.

Other members of the delegation included Members of Parliament Toshikatsu Matsuoka, Yosio Yatsu and Toyoaki Ota.

-- BERNAMA

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