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Malaysians not out to exploit others: Mahathir

Fauziah Ismail in Cairo

CAIRO, Tues: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysian investments in African states not only benefit the investors but also the economies they invest in.

One of the benefits is the creation of employment, Dr Mahathir told Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe during their meeting here late yesterday, at the sidelines of the Group of 15 (G-15) summit.

Dr Mahathir, according to Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, had during the meeting raised his concern over unfavourable foreign media reports and campaigns on Malaysian investments in African states.

"Dr Mahathir told Mugabe that Malaysian investors are not in Africa to exploit the situation. Whatever projects undertaken by them in Africa are those that bring benefits to both the investors and the host countries," Abdullah told reporters after the meeting.

"These unfavourable foreign news reports and the campaigns against Malaysia are unfair. Companies have pumped in a lot of money into Africa and these reports and campaigns will make them suffer losses instead," Abdullah told reporters after the meeting.

Today, the G-15 leaders leave for a resort at Sinai for a day-long retreat while the foreign ministers and trade and economic ministers will hold their own retreat here in Cairo.

Tomorrow, the G-15 leaders will end the eighth summit with the release of a joint communique. Dr Mahathir will be leaving for Khartoum tomorrow to begin a four-day official visit of Sudan.

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