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APEC-NEWS-SHIPLEY

NEW ZEALAND PRIME MINISTER TO HOLD TALKS WITH DR MAHATHIR

WELLINGTON, Nov 12 (Bernama-Xinhua) -- New Zealand Prime Minister Jenny Shipley expects to hold talks with Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the forthcoming Apec leaders' summit in Kuala Lumpur.

"It is not New Zealand's style to boycott meetings with international leaders because of differences of opinion," the New Zealand Press Association (NZPA) quoted her as saying.

Shipley is also likely to hold informal talks with United States President Bill Clinton in Kuala Lumpur.

The Prime Minister said that her main focus at the forthcoming Apec leaders' meeting would be to promote New Zealand's interests.

Shipley who would leave for Kuala Lumpur on Sunday said New Zealand would do its best to promote the liberalization of world trade and urged other countries, Japan in particular, to drop their tariffs.

The NZPA also quoted her as saying that this year's Apec leaders' meeting would prove the most difficult yet in which to reach agreement on how to make progress in liberalization of world trade.

It also quoted Prime Minister Shipley as saying that she did not want to preempt negotiations on the issue by speculating on their outcome but hoped progress would be made.

-- BERNAMA-XINHUA

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