

06/10/1998

Preparing to meet needs of Apec summit delegates

PETALING JAYA, Mon. - To accommodate the needs of delegates attending the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation summit in Kuala Lumpur next month, 125 Government officers today went on a course to familiarise themselves with the protocol and general knowledge to make the summit a success.

These include the understanding of international and federal protocol, cross-cultural communications and knowledge of local tourism.

Opening the "Apec Liaison Officers Course 1998" at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations here, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali said much is expected of the Kuala Lumpur summit, apart from the agendas that would be discussed.

Dr Siti Hasmah added that the way the conference is organised and the treatment accorded to foreign guests would create a lasting impression on the delegates.

"Serious consideration should therefore be given to protocol related matters as an important dimension of the organisation of the summit. Failure to do so, leading to organisational and protocol blunders on our part, will have a significant impact on the overall outcome of the summit," she said.

Dr Siti Hasmah later gave the officers from Wisma Putra, International Trade and Industry Ministry, Prime Minister's Department and other ministries a talk on the subject based on her own experiences when on official visits abroad.

She particularly touched on the needs of the spouse of leaders who might want to make their own side visits, hence the need for knowledge of local tourism.

The Apec summit will be held from Nov 12 to 19.

Among the leaders expected to attend are United States President Bill Clinton, Russia's President Boris Yeltsin and People's Republic of China President Jiang Zemin.

(END)