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Singapore-visit

SINGAPORE PREMIER MAKES WORKING VISIT TO MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 13 (Bernama) -- Singapore Premier Goh Chok Tong will make a working visit to Malaysia on Monday and Tuesday amid a flurry of consultations among Asean leaders on the financial and economic downturn in the region.

Goh would be received by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on arrival at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah airport, according to a Foreign Ministry statement today.

The two leaders will then proceed to the Prime Minister's Office for a meeting that will focus on financial and economic situation and efforts to enhance intra-Asean trade and promote the use of regional currencies.

Bilateral discussions are also expected to feature prominently during the discussions between Dr Mahathir and Goh who last met only six days ago in Singapore.

This will be the third meeting between them so far this year. They had earlier met in Johor Baharu on Jan 20.

Dr Mahathir and Goh are also among Asean leaders who have visited Jakarta to discuss economic issues with President Suharto.

Indonesia and Thailand were badly hit by the turmoil and have sought assistance from the International Monetary Fund.

Asean countries have discussed intensively to step up intra-Asean trade using their own currencies following the depreciation of their currencies against the US dollar.

Last week, Dr Mahathir said after meeting his Thai counterpart Chuan Leekpai in Bangkok, that Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia had agreed to set up a clearing house for intra-Asean trade using their respective currencies.

Dr Mahathir also expressed the hope that other Asean countries would accept the idea.

Goh would be accompanied by his wife, Foreign Minister S.Jayakumar and a delegation of senior officials from his office and the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Dr Mahathir would host a dinner for his guest at Sri Perdana on Monday.

Goh is also scheduled to visit Cyberjaya, Malaysia's high-tech multimedia city on the outskirts of the capital, the Kuala Lumpur City Centre and the broadcasting centre for the All-Asia Satellite Television and Radio Company (Astro).

Goh and his delegation are expected to return to Singapore by road with a stopover in Melaka where he would be hosted to a luncheon by Chief Minister Datuk Seri Abu Zahar Isnin.

He will visit some industrial sites in Melaka before heading back to Singapore via the newly-opened Malaysia-Singapore second link at Gelang Patah.

-- BERNAMA

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