

26 FEB 1999
D-8-SUMMIT
ALL SET FOR D-8 SUMMIT

By: Shafiqul Bashar

DHAKA, Feb 26 (Bernama) -- All is set for the holding of the second summit of the group of eight Islamic developing countries (D-8) on March 1 and 2 here.

Four heads of government would participate at the summit of the D-8 which is aimed at reinforcing cooperation among a core group of Islamic countries by way of joint projects to lift the livelihood of the people within it.

Members of the D-8 include Iran, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Nigeria and Turkey.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would leave for the summit on Sunday.

The other heads of government include President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan and the host country's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed.

Iran would be represented by its first vice-president Dr Hassan Habibi, Indonesia by its Minister for People's Welfare and Poverty Eradication Haryano Suyono and Egypt by its Minister of Foreign Affairs Amre M. Moussa.

Launched in June 1997 in Istanbul as a project-oriented organisation, the D-8 has already made headway by successfully developing a prototype light agricultural aircraft, a project led by Turkey.

Malaysia, entrusted with the task of developing and promoting Islamic banking and insurance among member countries, has already established a takaful or Islamic insurance joint venture with Indonesia.

As a result, it has been asked to present a paper on the retakaful or Islamic reinsurance business at the Dhaka summit.

Meanwhile, the D-8 Commission, the executive organ of the grouping composed of senior officials of its member countries, began a two-day meeting Thursday to prepare the agenda and the draft of the Dhaka Declaration to be adopted by the summit.

The Commission is expected to complete work on the agenda and the draft declaration Friday which would be finalised by the council of ministers.

The council comprising foreign ministers of the D-8 countries, meets here Saturday to approve the agenda and the draft declaration.

Foreign Minister Datuk Syed Hamid Albar is expected to arrive in Dhaka late tonight to attend the commissioners meeting.--BERNAMA

SB MR