

15 OCT 1999

Iran-Plan

IRAN INVITES M'SIA TO PLAY ACTIVE ROLE IN ITS ECONOMIC PLAN

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 15 (Bernama) -- Iran today invited Malaysia to play an active role in its third five-year economic plan that will be ratified by its parliament soon.

First Vice-Speaker of Iran's Consultative Assembly Dr Hassan Rouhani said Malaysia could play an active role, particularly in the investment sector.

The invitation was conveyed to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at a meeting between the two leaders in Putrajaya today, Dr Hassan told a news conference, here.

"Generally, we asked the prime minister to give an active role for Malaysia in our economic programmes. We can expand our bilateral relations through this," he said through an interpreter at the end of his one-week trip to Malaysia.

Dr Hassan said both sides had also agreed to increase their cooperation in the gas and oil industries, not only in Iran but also in other countries in the region.

Petronas is involved in Iran's South Pars gas field in a joint venture with Total SA of France and Gazprom of Russia.

Dr Hassan said Iran and Malaysia would also increase their cooperation in the fields of education, culture and architecture as well as enhance their discussions on the Islamic world.

He said both leaders also discussed the Balkan and East Timor issues.

"I was particularly impressed with the government's administration building in Putrajaya. It has a lot of Islamic architecture, especially those inspired by Isfahan (Kuala Lumpur's twin city)," he said.

During his visit here at the invitation of Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tun Mohamed Zahir Ismail, Dr Hassan also met Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar and visited the Economic Planning Unit and the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

He said he believed that the MSC project would bring drastic change to Malaysia and added that Iran was willing to provide Malaysia with its multimedia technology experts.

Dr Hassan said he was also impressed by Malaysia's success in overcoming the economic crisis without assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

-- BERNAMA

AR JK