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MAHATHIR HOLDS TALKS WITH VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT

PUTRAJAYA, Oct 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today held talks with Venezuelan President Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias who is in Malaysia to attract Malaysian business in a bid to revive his country's economy.

The meeting was held at the Prime Minister's Department, here.

The two leaders later attended the Malaysia-Venezuela delegation meeting. Among those in the Malaysian delegation were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar and International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz.

Chavez Frias, who arrived yesterday, is here on a three-day state visit.

He is on his first visit to East and Southeast Asia since assuming the presidency last February.

His visit to Malaysia was aimed at strengthening Venezuela-Malaysia ties and exchanging views and experiences with Malaysian leaders on economic development and international issues, the Foreign Ministry said.

The presidential entourage includes senior officers of the Venezuelan Planning and Development, Commerce and Production, Infrastructure, Energy and Mines and Science and Technology ministries.

-- BERNAMA

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