

15 AUG 1999

Rafidah-China

TRADE MISSION LEAVES FOR CHINA THIS WEEK

KAJANG, Aug 15 (Bernama) -- A Malaysian trade mission leaves for China this week in conjunction with the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Sino-Malaysian diplomatic ties.

Minister of International Trade and Industry Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said her deputy Datuk Kerk Choo Ting would lead the mission.

Rafidah, who herself would be in China on Wednesday and Thursday this week as part of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's delegation, said she would be a speaker at the Malaysia-China Forum in Beijing.

"There is vast potential for stepping up trade and investment ties. It is hoped that the visit can enhance bilateral ties," she told reporters after launching her ministry's Family Day celebrations at Country Heights Resort here today.

Malaysia became the first Asean nation to establish diplomatic ties with China during former prime minister Tun Abdul Razak's visit to Beijing on May 31, 1974. China is among the 10 biggest export markets for Malaysia.

Rafidah said Malaysia had invested a lot in China and the republic too was keen to invest in capital-intensive industries in this country with the intention of taking back the goods produced here to China.

Among China's investments is a joint-venture pulp and paper mill project in Tawau.

The minister said Malaysia and China had established a joint commission, headed by her and her Chinese counterpart, to deal with problems in bilateral trade and investment ties.

"So far we have been able to indentify the problems and how we can adjust policies to step up step up bilateral trade," he added.

-- BERNAMA

rv sk