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APEC-SUMMIT
APEC ECONOMIC LEADERS' SUMMIT STARTS

By: Mohd Nasir Yusof

Bandar Seri Begawan, Nov 15 (Bernama) -- The APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting (AELM) begins here today with almost full attendance of leaders of the forum's 21-member economies at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in this capital city of Brunei Darussalam.

So far, 15 of the 21 leaders have arrived for the two-day APEC 2000 Summit, the first in the new millennium, while two economies, Vietnam and Taiwan, have sent their Leader Representatives.

Those who are already here include Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, U.S. President Bill Clinton, Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Japan's Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, Indonesian President Abdul Rahman Wahid and Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong.

Other leaders such as Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai are expected to arrive here only tonight but would still be in time for the Leaders' Retreat at the Jerudong Polo Club tomorrow.

The summit follows a two-day Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on Nov 10-11 and the Ministerial Meeting on Nov 12-13.

However, the SOM, scheduled for two days had managed to wrap up their businesses of setting the agenda for the Ministers' Meeting within a day.

According to the Summit schedule, Heads of Economies arriving at the ICC around 2pm will be greeted by the Sultan of Brunei, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah at the front concourse of the centre.

They will then pose for a group photograph at the central concourse before attending Leaders Agenda Briefing for about half an hour at the Dewan Muzakarah, at the ICC.

Later the leaders will hold a dialogue with the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), -- the private sector version of APEC, at the Main Conference Hall of the ICC for about one hour.

Viewing of Young Artists' Arts Exhibition at the Delima Hall, ICC, is also on the agenda for the leaders before they attend Leaders' Dinner at the Plenary Hall, ICC later today. -- BERNAMA

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