

12 NOV 2000
APEC-MINISTERS
APEC MINISTERIAL MEETING BEGINS

By: Ahmad Fuad Yahya

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Nov 12 (Bernama) -- Apec Ministers began their meeting at the International Convention Centre here today with talks expected to centre on issues of globalisation.

The meeting, among other things, will follow up on instructions given to officials last year to further advance work on trade and investment liberalization and facilitation and economic and technical cooperation (Ecotech).

They include improving individual action plans (IAPs) to be more business-friendly as well as improving collective action plans (CAPs) which include exploring means to reduce non-tariff measures, custom procedures, and facilitation of movement of business.

It would also delve into issues on how economies could reap greater benefits from the development of information and communication technology (ICT), and efforts on human resource development.

The Ministers will also exchange views on Apec's contribution to the multilateral trading system and the proliferation of regional trading arrangements (RTAs) and discuss the impact of higher oil prices on Apec economies.

Malaysia is represented at the meeting by International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz.

Rafidah said in Kuala Lumpur last Friday that Malaysia would propose the development of a network of skills development centres for Apec economies at the Apec meetings here.

The Apec meetings kicked off last Friday with the senior officials meeting. The Ministerial Meeting which ends tomorrow will be followed by the Apec Leaders Summit on Nov 15-16.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is due to arrive here on Tuesday for the summit. -- BERNAMA

AFY ES RM