

16 DEC 2000

BOC-OPERATIONS

BANK OF CHINA RESUMES OPERATIONS AFTER 40 YEARS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 16 (Bernama) -- Bank Of China (BOC) re-opened its doors in Malaysia today, 40 years after legal requirements had forced it to cease operations in this country.

BOC, the fourth largest state-owned commercial bank in China, will offer a wide range of banking products including trade financing, commercial loans, deposit and saving account services.

The BOC branch here, located at Plaza OSK, Jalan Ampang, is headed by Zhang Lianli as its Director and General Manager.

Zhang when met by newsmen at the branch's soft launch today said that the road to the re-establishment of BOC in Malaysia was set on Nov 22 last when Malaysia and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of banking institutions in each other's territory.

The signing of the MoU was witnessed by Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and visiting Chinese premiere, Zhu Rongji.

Following the MoU, Bank Negara Malaysia announced its decision to reinstate BOC's permit to recommence its banking activities in this country from Aug 1 this year.

On the Malaysian side, the beneficiary was Malayan Banking Bhd which is scheduled to open its branch in the commercial city of Shanghai in January next year.

BOC had to give up its banking license in 1960 following the Malaysian government's decision not to allow banks under the effective control of foreign governments to operate in Malaysia.

However, the re-establishment was made possible after the Banking and Financial Institutions Act 1989 was amended four years ago.

Founded in 1912, BOC is China's oldest bank and has been listed in Fortune 500 for 11 consecutive years.

The bank was also elected "Best Domestic Bank" in China by Euromoney from 1992 to 1999.

By the end of 1999, BOC has 15,228 domestic branches and 557 overseas branches, covering 22 countries.

The branch in Kuala Lumpur is the bank's fourth in South East Asia, with the other three in Singapore, Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City.

Also present at today's soft launch was Chinese Ambassador to Malaysia, Guan Dengming. -- BERNAMA

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