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LID-ZUMA

LID: SOUTH AFRICA SEEKS MORE ECONOMIC INTERACTION WITH M'ASIA

By: Mohd Rizal Razalli

LANGKAWI, Nov 20 (Bernama) -- South Africa, which aims to lift itself out of the poverty trap, wants to enhance economic interaction with Malaysia, its deputy president Jacob G.Zuma, says.

He said that from constant interaction, South Africa could gain valuable suggestions from Malaysia which could assist the country to change its economic landscape in order to eradicate poverty and bridge the gap between the rich and the poor.

"What we mostly need to know is how economic interaction can help us alleviate the (high) level of poor people (in our country)," Zuma told newsmen here today after a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Zuma is among the 12 heads of government from Southern African countries attending the four-day Langkawi International Dialogue 2000 (LID 2000), a high-powered gathering of top-level government leaders, academia, corporate chiefs and media experts, which began yesterday.

Besides Zuma, Dr Mahathir also had bilateral meetings with the Republic of Seychelles Vice President James Alix Michel and Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

According to Zuma an intensified interaction will promote a much better understanding and help to change the quality of life of the South African people.

He said that interaction between Malaysia and South Africa had helped the country to emphasise more on development which could help to eradicate poverty.

"We discussed, specifically about our country because we are trying to emphasise on a greater sustainable growth development and we will certainly want to discuss it further," he said.

He said that he had a good discussion with Dr Mahathir.

"There were several suggestions (made by Dr Mahathir)," he added.

He pointed out that Malaysia has played an almost catalytic role in ensuring interaction between both countries.

Zuma is optimistic that there would be more interaction in the future not only between both governments but also among companies which are involved in joint venture projects. -- BERNAMA

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