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G15-Members

MALAYSIA BACKS IRAN'S APPLICATION TO JOIN G15

By: Ahmad Zukiman Zain

CAIRO, June 15 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will support Iran's bid to join the G15, the grouping of developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America which is holding its 10th summit here.

A Malaysian official said Tehran's application is expected to be discussed by G15 senior officials at their meeting tomorrow.

Host Egypt is also keen to have other countries such as South Africa and Saudi Arabia to join G15 which held its first summit in Kuala Lumpur in 1990.

Although the grouping has expanded from the original 15, it has retained the name. The group last admitted Sri Lanka as its 17th member two years ago.

The official said Malaysia was backing Iran's application as apart from Tehran's interest to join the grouping, its membership would also enable Asia to be better represented.

Apart from Malaysia and Sri Lanka, Asia's two other members are Indonesia and India. Africa has six members and the rest are from South America.

It is learnt that seven heads of government have confirmed their attendance at the summit beginning Monday.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, is scheduled to arrive here on Saturday night.

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz is already here for talks with her G15 counterparts to prepare for the summit.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar is scheduled to arrive here tomorrow for the G15 meeting, the second to be hosted by Egypt after 1998.

-- BERNAMA

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