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PM to lead team to South Summit

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will lead the Malaysian delegation to the first ever South Summit of the Group of 77 and China in Havana from April 12 to 14.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the summit would address the issues of globalisation, North-South relations, South-South co-operation, knowledge and technology.

"It is also expected to discuss preparations for the 55th United Nations General Assembly and Summit of the Millennium to be held in September this year," he told a Press conference today.

The Prime Minister would be accompanied by his wife, Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Syed Hamid and senior Government officials.

The summit will be preceded by a meeting of senior officials on April 10 and the foreign ministers the next day.

He said among issues to be raised by Dr Mahathir at the summit would be globalisation and the implications of technological advances on developing countries.

"It will provide Malaysia an opportunity to exchange views of common concern with other member countries while also being able to state its position on a number of international issues, particularly the reform of the global financial architecture, globalisation and liberalisation," he said.

Malaysia would also seek greater South-South co-operation to strengthen the negotiating position of G77 in its dialogue with the North.

The meeting would be the largest gathering of heads of state and government from 133 developing member countries of the G77 and China. It is expected to conclude its meeting with a declaration and a programme for action.

Commenting on China's participation, Syed Hamid said it is a big country and should not be excluded following the emergence of the new world order.

"Malaysia is one country which does not like to see the end of the Cold War with just a unipolar world.

"I think the world needs to be multipolar where we can all co-operate to make it a more equitable world with equal opportunities," he added.

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