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Prince Sultan visits Malaysia on invitation

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KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The visit by Saudi Arabian Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Sultan Abdul Aziz Al Saud to Malaysia tomorrow is expected to open a new chapter in bilateral relations between both countries.

The kingdom's ambassador Hamed Mohamed Ali Yahya said today that the historic visit by the prince was a good opportunity for both sides to further explore co-operation in the various fields including trade and economy.

Also present during the interview at the Saudi embassy was Malaysian-Saudi Arabian Friendship Society secretary-general Ahmad Khairuddin Ilias.

The prince is expected to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and other Malaysian ministers during the visit.

"Insya Allah, the visit's output will be good for the people of both countries," he said.

He said the visit by Prince Sultan, who is also the Kingdom's Aviation and Defence Minister, is at the invitation of Dr Mahathir. His entourage would include four Saudi princes, three senior ministers, senior officials and representatives from the private sector.

Hamed Mohamed said the delegation was also expected to meet with members of the Malaysian Chambers of Commerce and Trade to explore investment opportunities in both countries.

He also expressed his happiness on the cooperation forged with the MSAFS which was established in 1991.

Hamed Mohamed said the society had made great contributions towards promoting better understanding and co-operation between peoples of both countries.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Khairuddin said they felt honoured with the visit of Prince Sultan, who is a brother of Saudi Ruler, King Fahd Abdul Aziz.

He said the last visit by a senior member of the Saudi royal household to Malaysia was the late King Faisal Abdul Aziz in 1970.

Meanwhile, Bernama reports that Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the visit, from tomorrow until Oct 31, would focus on numerous issues, especially in bringing about peace in West Asia and the Palestine-Israel conflict.

"On the Palestine issue we have made our stand clear, that is, Israel should stop using its military on civilians and should find ways to reach a peace accord," he told reporters after receiving the Republic of Benin Foreign Minister Adji Antoine at Wisma Putra, here.

He said Prince Sultan was also expected to brief Dr Mahathir and Abdullah on decisions taken at the recently concluded summit of the 22-member Arab League in Cairo.

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