

26 JAN 2001

Syed Hamid-Bahrain

BAHRAINI PRIME MINISTER ARRIVES ON MONDAY FOR THREE-DAY VISIT

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 26 (Bernama) -- Bahraini Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa will arrive here on Monday for a three-day official visit to Malaysia.

In conjunction with the visit, both countries are expected to sign a memorandum of understanding to establish a joint commission which will pave the way for greater economic cooperation between the two countries.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar told reporters today that Shaikh Khalifa would be accompanied by a 55-member delegation including four ministers during the visit.

The visit is at the invitation of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to reciprocate Dr Mahathir's visit to Bahrain in 1997.

"The visit will provide an opportunity for the two prime ministers to renew their personal contacts.

"The two prime ministers will lead their respective delegations to discuss ways to enhance bilateral cooperation between the two friendly and brotherly countries," he said.

The two prime ministers are also expected to discuss regional and international issues.

According to Syed Hamid, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah and Dr Mahathir would be hosting dinner in honour of the Bahraini prime minister.

Shaikh Khalifa will also be conferred by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong the honorary award Darjah Kehormat Seri Maharaja Mangku Negara (SMN) or the Grand Commander of the Order of the Defender of the Realm, which carries the title "Tun".

He will also be conferred the honorary Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Political Science by the Constitutional Head of the International Islamic University of Malaysia.

The state of Bahrain is an archipelago of low lying islands located in the Arabian Gulf of the eastern shore of Saudi Arabia.

Frequently called the "Pearl of the Arabian Gulf", Bahrain has a history of more than 5,000 years of civilization, under a stable and prosperous government.

Manama is the capital of Bahrain.

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