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German firms view country favourably

PUTRAJAYA, Thurs. - German companies operating here do not share the view of the Western media that Malaysia's policies are unfavourable for trade and investment.

Malaysian-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry executive director Dr Rainer Herret said the presence of 300 successful German companies in Malaysia was testimony to this.

"If that was the case, then what have we been doing here for the last 10 years," he questioned at a Press conference after leading talks between representatives of the chamber and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad here today.

He said this message was conveyed to Dr Mahathir during the one-hour discussion held at the Prime Minister's office.

Also part of the 12-member delegation was German ambassador to Malaysia Jurgen Staks.

Herret said there was a lack understanding on Malaysia's policies by the Western media and as such expects them to be very critical when Dr Mahathir visits Germany next month.

He said Malaysia and Germany enjoyed good diplomatic and economic ties, with the latter being the second largest European investor in the country.

Germany's investment in Malaysia is increasing and we see no reason why we cannot double the volume."

He said German businessmen saw a lot of potential in Malaysia's tourism sector if more effort, such as roadshows and publicity campaigns, is taken to promote the country in Europe.

"We know for a fact that Malaysia has a lot to offer ... and we want to support the tourism business here."

The education sector, especially professional training programmes, was also another field that was seriously being looked into, he said.

On Dr Mahathir's visit, he said the Prime Minister will be in Germany from Sept 18-20 and will visit Munich and Berlin.

He will also be hosted to an official luncheon by German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder on Sept 20.

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