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Guingona-Malaysia

PHILIPPINE VICE PRESIDENT TO VISIT KL, OTHER ASEAN NATIONS

MANILA May 16 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will be the first stop when Philippine Vice-President Teofisto Guingona leaves on Thursday for a five-day swing through Asean neighbours.

Guingona, also Foreign Affairs Secretary, will meet Malaysian officials and also call on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said today.

He is expected to brief Malaysian officials on the political and economic developments in the Philippines and confer with them on issues of bilateral concern.

In its statement, the DFA said Guingona will also lay the groundwork for the official visit this year to Malaysia of President Gloria Arroyo.

From Malaysia, the vice-president will proceed to Brunei Darussalam and Singapore en route to an Asia-Europe meeting in China, the DFA said.

It said Guingona will also meet the Filipino communities in the three Asean neighbours.

In China, he will meet with his counterpart, Chinese Vice-President Hu Jintao and representatives of European countries.

Guingona's trip abroad is his second since he assumed the posts of vice-president and foreign secretary last January after the government of then president Joseph Estrada was toppled in a military-backed protest rally.

He visited Myanmar last month to attend the Asean foreign ministers' meeting.

Asean groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

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