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Vajpayee-Visit

VAJPAYEE VISIT TO PROVIDE IMPETUS TO ENHANCED COOPERATION

By: Ahmad Kamil Tahir

KUALA LUMPUR, May 12 (Bernama) -- Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's four-day visit to Malaysia beginning tomorrow will provide the impetus for enhanced cooperation in various fields between both countries, Indian High Commissioner Veena Sikri said today.

She said India was looking forward to having a full range of cooperation with Malaysia in many areas such as in education, economy, trade and commerce as well as in the social, cultural and Information Technology (IT) fields.

In an interview with Bernama at her office here, Veena said the close trade and cultural relationship between Malaysia and India would be further enhanced through her Prime Minister's visit.

She said the main focus of the talks which Vajpayee would hold with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would be on developing the vast business potential between India and Malaysia

"Business relationship between India and Malaysia has big potential for both ways .It is in many ways a win-win relationship," she said.

"There are many potential areas which both sides can exploit. For example in the area of infrastructure Malaysian companies are building roads in India and Indian companies are building railways in Malaysia," she said.

Veena said Vajpayee would be accompanied by a 135-member delegation including 75 Indian businessmen.

She said this demonstrated Indian businessmen's confidence in Malaysia as the gateway for Indian products, especially in IT, to other Asean countries.

"India is one of the world's largest IT software producers and Malaysia has very good infrastructure in IT as well for the hardware industry as well as in the electronic and electrical sector."

"India is the largest importer of Malaysian palm oil and similarly Malaysia imports a lot of meat and foodstuffs from India ... so we like to develop this partnership," she added.

"Malaysia has tremendously well developed infrastructure facilities and it will be excellent for Indian companies to come here and then export to the rest of Asean."

Veena said to develop the partnership between Malaysian and Indian businessmen, a one day Malaysia-India business forum would be held at the Putra World Trade Centre during Vajpayee's visit.

She said besides various trade agreements, India hoped to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Malaysia on IT cooperation, free visa travel, tourism as well as on avoidance of double taxation.

-- BERNAMA

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