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Venezuela-Arrival

VENEZUELA PRESIDENT ARRIVES FOR TWO-DAY VISIT TO MALAYSIA

SEPANG, May 28 (Bernama) -- Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez is in Malaysia for a two-day visit which is expected to increase trade and tourism ties between the two countries.

This is his second official visit to Malaysia after having visited the country in October 1999.

Chavez was greeted on arrival at the KL International Airport here today by Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz and Venezuela's Ambassador to Malaysia Noel Ochoa. Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar is in Indonesia in conjunction with the G-15 summit.

The 30-member presidential entourage includes Foreign Minister Col Luis Alfonso Davila, Science and Technology Minister Dr Carlos Genatios and Planning and Development Minister Dr Jorge Giordani and businessmen.

Tomorrow, Chavez will hold talks with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Putrajaya.

He is also expected to meet Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik to discuss increased cooperation between the two countries in the area of rubber and plantation industries.

Chavez is scheduled to leave for Jakarta tomorrow to attend the Group of 15 (G-15) summit.

During his last official trip to Malaysia, the two countries signed a joint declaration to review, update and relaunch all the agreements signed between Venezuela and Malaysia.

Venezuela and Malaysia had also agreed to identify joint projects for the future particularly in the area of the petrochemical industry. Venezuela is a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

The two countries also decided to reactivate their joint commission in a bid to strengthen and renew bilateral ties and cooperation.

Chavez had then expressed concern over the small trade volume between Malaysia and Venezuela which he said, totalled US\$30.6 million in 1998, down 18.5 per cent from US\$37.6 million in 1997.

-- BERNAMA

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