

# Dr Mahathir in Tokyo to address annual Nikkei Conference today

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## From Syed Nadzri in Tokyo

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is staying in the same hotel on his two-day Tokyo visit as former United States President Bill Clinton.

It's most unlikely, however, the two statesmen will bump into each other at the huge Imperial Hotel which has 1,057 rooms and 66 suites as both are in the Japanese capital for different reasons.

Dr Mahathir is here to speak today at the annual Nikkei Conference being held at another hotel, some 20 minutes away.

He also has a tight schedule lined up which includes discussions with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone.

Clinton, meanwhile, is in town to give a lecture at the United Nations University.

Another head of Government in Tokyo is Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who begins her three-day official visit today. She is also due to speak at the Nikkei conference.

Dr Mahathir arrived late yesterday by private jet and took the train from Narita airport to the hotel in downtown Tokyo. He was seen off in Kuala Lumpur by his wife Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali and Ministers.

Malaysia's Ambassador to Japan Datuk Marzuki Mohammad Noor said it was faster for the Prime Minister to take the train as this would avoid the traffic congestion on the road during the evening rush hour. Furthermore, Dr Mahathir was due to have a private dinner with Nakasone soon after his arrival.

Dr Mahathir will begin his day today with a breakfast meeting with members of the Japan-Malaysia Parliamentarians Friendship League.

This group represents a cross-section of Japanese MPs who are conversant with issues affecting Malaysia.

Meanwhile, Bernama reports that Dr Mahathir will proceed to South Korea tomorrow at the invitation of President Kim Dae-jung in a visit aimed at enhancing Kuala Lumpur-Seoul relations and rapport between both leaders.

Dr Mahathir will also speak at a business luncheon organised by four major Korean business associations and visit Hyundai Motor Research and Development, LG Chemical Investment and Satellite Technology Research Centre Initiative.

Dr Mahathir's delegation includes Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, Energy, Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Amar Leo Moggie and Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain.