22 MAY 2002
Mahathir-arrival
DR MAHATHIR ARRIVES FOR THREE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT

By: Amin Husaini Harun

SEOUL, May 22 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived here today for a three-day official visit that will mark a new chapter in Malaysia's bilateral relations with South Korea especially cooperation in high technology and information and communication technology (ICT).

The visit on the invitation of President Kim Dae-jung is Dr Mahathir's final leg of his East Asian tour after Japan on May 20.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar is confident that the visit will not only help to strengthen bilateral trade and investment but mark the start-up of greater cooperation in high technology and ICT.

Speaking to the Malaysian pressmen covering Dr Mahathir's visit here, he said the Prime Minister would also deliver a thank you speech to South Korea for helping to make Malaysia's 19-year-old Look East Policy a success.

Under the policy, South Korea had trained some 1,800 Malaysians and hopefully training could be extended to cover high technology and ICT in the near future, he said.

Syed Hamid said Dr Mahathir would visit and hold discussions with vehicle manufacturers, Kia and Hyundai on how they could help to train Malaysian youths in high technology.

He said the Prime Minister would also touch on the right to fly here, currently five times a week, and fifth freedom right to enable Malaysia Airlines (MAS) to fly to other destinations in South Korea.

Regional and global issues would also be raised by Dr Mahathir in his meeting with President Kim and during the full discussion at the delegation level, he said.

These included the proposal to institutionalised Asean+3 by setting up its secretariat in Kuala Lumpur, the fight against transnational crime, the fight against international terrorism and the situation in the Korean peninsula to help North Korea to overcome the hardship faced by its people.

Dr Mahathir will start his visit by meeting and having a dialogue with the Malaysian students and community in South Korea to update them on developments at home.

Tomorrow, he will lay wreaths at the war memorial before meeting President Kim at the Blue House, followed by discussion at the delegation level.

At noon, Dr Mahathir will be entertained to a luncheon by the Korean Federation of Small and Medium Business, Federation of Korean Industries, Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Korea International Trade Association.

In the afternoon, the Prime Minister will visit the Hyundai Motor Research and Development Centre in Gyeonggi-do followed by a state banquet at the Blue House in the evening.

Before returning to Kulala Lumpur on May 24, Dr Mahathir and delegation will visit the LG Chemical Investment and Satellite Technology Research Centre Initiative (SaTReCi), both in Daejon.

He will fly home from Chongju International Airport by executive jet at 1pm (noon in Malaysia).

Meanwhile, the 106-member business delegation will sign seven Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with their counterparts here.

The MoUs are:

+ Between Matrade and Korea International Trade to promote mutual cooperation on trade promotion;

+ Between Naza Kia Sdn Bhd and KIA Motors Corporation to establish a joint venture in manufacturing and assembling of KIA vehicles in Malaysia for Malaysian and Asia Pacific markets;

+ Between LG Chem Investment Ltd, Korea and Innobiologis Sdn Bhd Malaysia to joinly process development of established mammalian cell line for recombinant bio-pharmaceutical production in Malaysia;

+ Between Hanyang University, Korea and Innobiologics Sdn Bhd for a joint research and development of biologics;

+ Between Pangen Biotech, Amersham Biosciences Ltd, both of Korea, and Innobiologics Sdn Bhd for a joint process development of established mammalian cell line for recombinant bio-pharmaceutical production in Malaysia;

+ Between Telekom Malaysia Berhad and KT Corporation, Korea in technology transfer and cooperation on the broadband Internet business in the areas of broadband Internet engineering services, broadband internet equipment provision, broadband internet operation and management system, broadband internet contents system, and System Integration and Network Services; and

+ Between Phytes Biotek Sdn Bhd and Dae Seong Trading Co, Korea on the purchase of tongkat ali products by Dae Seong to manufacture herbal energy energy drink from Phytes Biotek.

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