

12 DEC 2002

JAPAN APPROVES SOFT LOAN FOR INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECT

TOKYO, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Japan has approved a soft loan to Malaysia to finance the project to channel water from Pahang to Selangor, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said he was informed by his Japanese counterpart Junichiro Koizumi on the matter during his meeting at the latter's office here today.

The amount of the loan would be decided by officials of both countries, he told Malaysian journalists covering his official visit at his hotel suite today.

On his audience with Emperor Akihito at the Imperial Palace this morning, Dr Mahathir said he had extended an invitation for them to visit Malaysia.

"Our (Yang di-Pertuan) Agong is coming here, hopefully in 2004 (they will visit us), he was very knowledgeable about Malaysia," he said.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived here early today, had an audience with Emperor Akihito at the Imperial Palace before attending the Seminar on the 20th Anniversary of the Look East Policy where he delivered a keynote address and later participated in an extensive dialogue session.

-- BERNAMA

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