

# Putin likely to visit in early August

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Russian President Vladimir Putin's rescheduled visit to Malaysia will likely take place early next month, with Aug 5 being viewed as a possible date.

Wisma Putra and Russian Embassy officials are working on a new date for the visit, which would be the first here by a Russian president.

It is learnt that both governments are discussing alternative dates spanning late July to early August, but a date next

month would be the most likely choice for both sides.

It is also learnt that Putin had telephoned Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to convey his apologies for putting off his planned trip here last Monday following Saturday's suicide-bombing incident in Moscow.

Wisma Putra deputy secretary-general (I) Datuk Abdul Aziz Mohammed confirmed that several dates were being considered but said that early

August would be the most suitable period.

"President Putin's visit is definitely on. There is no cancellation," he said when contacted.

Russian Ambassador to Malaysia Vladimir Morozov had said on Monday that his president was committed to travelling to Malaysia.

Several Russian businessmen have already made their way here. Among them was Irkutsk Aviation vice-president Dr Vladimir Sautov.