

11 JAN 2003

Chua-Visit

CHUA LEADS HEALTH MINISTRY DELEGATION TO WEST ASIAN COUNTRIES

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng will head a delegation of ministry officials and private sector representatives to four Arab countries from tomorrow till Jan 21.

The trip will take him to Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Bahrain.

He said his trip to Saudi Arabia was following the visit by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to the King Fahd National Guard Hospital in Riyadh to meet the team that performed the operation to separate the conjoined twins of Ahmad and Muhamad Rosli on Oct 19 last year.

"The Cabinet has proposed that his ministry sends a delegation to look into the possibility of further cooperation and collaboration in the medical field and to strengthen the rapport already established between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia," he told reporters after the ministry's Hari Raya gathering here today.

He said the Chief Surgeon of the Paediatric Institute of Kuala Lumpur Hospital, Dr Zakaria Zahari, and his team, which performed another separation of Siamese twins in November, would be among the members of the delegation.

"This visit will be an opportunity for our surgeons to discuss further on upgrading similar services and future collaboration arrangements," he said.

Chua said the purpose of the visit was to learn about their healthcare services and areas that could be collaborated.

Chua said the Association of the Private Hospitals of Malaysia was also part of the delegation.

"The association will be given the opportunity to present the information on the services of the private hospitals in Malaysia, especially those listed under Health and Medical Tourism Guide," he said.

Besides health tourism, Chua said, the private sector could look into areas of marketing Malaysian health products, including medicines and nutrition supplements produced locally.

-- BERNAMA

FA RV TS