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DR MAHATHIR TO VISIT UKRAINE TO ENHANCE BILATERAL TIES

KUALA LUMPUR, July 11 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's four-day official visit to Ukraine beginning Sunday reflects the close bond of friendship between Malaysia and the former Soviet bloc nation, Wisma Putra said today.

It said in a statement issued here that this will be Dr Mahathir's first official visit to the republic. The visit is at the invitation of President Leonid D.Kuchma.

Dr Mahathir, who left last night for London en route to Ukraine, will be accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali and several ministers.

They are Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Primary Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik and Education Minister Tan Sri Musa Mohamad.

Wisma Putra said that in the capital city of Kiev, Dr Mahathir will hold talks with Kuchma and also attend an official dinner hosted by Kuchma.

Dr Mahathir is also scheduled to visit the Antonov aircraft plant, the Black sea port of Odessa, both in Kiev, and Crimea, where he will meet Malaysian students there and officials of the Crimea Autonomous Republic.

In Odessa Port, Dr Mahathir will visit palm oil storage facilities.

"The official visit of the Prime Minister to Ukraine reflects the close bond of friendship between the two countries. The visit is expected to further enhance and strengthen Malaysia's ties with Ukraine," Wisma Putra said.

-- BERNAMA

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