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ABDULLAH-JAPAN

JAPANESE FINANCE MINISTER CALLS ON ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and Japan are discussing to create the Asian Bond market, Japanese Finance Minister Masajuro Shiokawa said today.

He said the matter was discussed in his meeting with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today.

"We try to push the idea forward," Shiokawa, who arrived here yesterday for a two-day visit to Malaysia, told reporters after calling on Abdullah at a leading hotel here.

Among the issues discussed during the 30-minute meeting are Asean Plus Three, Look East Policy, Asian Bond market and Vision 2020.

Shiokawa also extended invitation to Abdullah to visit Japan.

On Malaysia-Japan ties, he said, it was not only based on the Official Development Assistance (ODA) but bilateral relationship could also be framed in the context of brotherhood.

Shiokawa, who is also Chairman of the Japan-Malaysia Association in Japan, would meet Japanese business leaders in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, Japan and Malaysia are significant trading partners, with Tokyo being among Malaysia's top export markets.

Japan absorbed 10.6 percent of Malaysia's exports in October 2002 amounting to RM4.3 billion, higher by 6.3 percent from the previous month, mainly due to an increase in the intake of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), electrical and electronic goods and wood products (19.3 percent).

Imports from Japan in October last year amounted to RM4.9 billion. --
BERNAMA

LES SHO