

28 JAN 2003

NAM-Preparations

PREPARATIONS FOR NAM SUMMIT PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 28 (Bernama) -- Preparations for the upcoming 13th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit are proceeding smoothly and Malaysia "is well on its way to hosting the major event."

Foreign Ministry Secretary General Datuk Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak said Malaysia was logistically prepared to host the summit, here from Feb 20 to 25. It is expected to be attended by leaders of nearly 114 NAM member states.

"We had a dry-run of the opening ceremony today and everything proceeded smoothly...", he said.

He told reporters this after witnessing the dry-run at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

He said the event organisers, from various ministries, were now in the midst of fine-tuning the arrangements.

"More dry-runs are planned next month, which also involves traffic flow. We hope what we do will turn out to be the best NAM summit organised to date," he added.

He said the opening ceremony would include cultural performances by Istana Budaya dancers, the Federal Ballet Academy and the National Arts Academy.

There would also be a martial arts performance by the Persatuan Seni Silat Gayung Patani Malaysia while the music would be a mixture of Chinese, Indian, Orang Asli and Gamelan communities.

The opening ceremony dry-run started at 9am and lasted four hours.

Organisers expect foreign dignitaries to arrive for the opening ceremony from 8.30 am on Feb 25 and the event proper is scheduled to begin at 10am and run for 90 minutes.

"Highlight of the opening ceremony will be the speeches by several NAM leaders, including Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad," Ahmad Fuzi said.

He also said some of the 114 countries had confirmed their guest list. So far some 40 heads of state and government have confirmed their attendance.

For more NAM stories, log on to www.nam2003.com

-- BERNAMA

SR KHY AAM