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Sri Lanka-PM

SRI LANKAN PM BEGINS TWO-DAY VISIT TO MALAYSIA TUESDAY

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe will begin a two-day visit to Malaysia on Tuesday aimed at promoting investment and trade between the two countries.

Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to Malaysia Rosy Senanayake said today the visit was the pinnacle of a process she started since her appointment here in June to promote Malaysian investment in her country.

Wicremesinghe is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and leading Malaysian investors and businessmen during the visit, she said in a statement.

The visit came just a week after Sri Lanka held an investment seminar here which was attended by three of its Cabinet ministers.

Three Malaysian Cabinet ministers -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak (Defence), Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu (Works) and Datuk Seri Law Hieng Ding (Science, Technology and Environment) will also call on Wicremesinghe during his stay.

In the last few years, Malaysians have become among the top investors in Sri Lanka which has reported a surge in foreign investments, thanks to the ongoing ceasefire and peace talks to end the 20-year old ethnic conflict in the island nation.

Among them are Telekom Malaysia Berhad which has already invested US\$200 million (RM760 million) and which runs Sri Lanka's largest mobile phone operation.

The statement said a Memorandum of Understanding on the construction of Sri Lanka's first toll highway linking the two main cities of Colombo and Kandy would also be signed during the prime minister's visit.

The MoU followed talks in Colombo between Wicremesinghe and Samy Vellu.

An eminent lawyer turned politician, Wickremesinghe who came to power in December 2001 took special initiative to commence peace talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), resulting in the ceasefire agreement two months later.

Wickremesinghe was ranked among the 20 Asian Heroes by the Time magazine in July for his courageous decision to move ahead with the peace process in Sri Lanka.

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