

100 industry leaders to follow PM on China visit

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi will be accompanied by a delegation of nine ministers, four Menteris Besar and more than 100 corporate leaders on his five-day trip to China beginning Thursday.

Apart from several government-to-government memorandums of understanding to be signed, the private sectors of both countries are expected to ink several deals during the visit.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said MoUs would be signed in education, agriculture and science and technology.

He said as China had expertise in bio-technology, there was a possibility a MoU in this field would be signed.

He said an agreement would be signed with China's Institute of Diplomatic Foreign Relations for an exchange of officers between the two countries.

"This is to enable sharing of experiences and training programmes between the two countries, and for capacity building," he told reporters at Parliament lobby.

Syed Hamid said other topics would be discussed in economics, trade, investment, education, science and technology and agriculture.

He said the visit would enhance bilateral ties.

The Prime Minister will deliver a speech at a

forum organised by Matrade in Beijing, and open a consular office in the Chinese capital.

"The forum will provide an opportunity for the Chinese to see the opportunities and challenges in Malaysia in which they can partake."

Syed Hamid said Abdullah would meet his Chinese counterpart Wen Jiabao and President Hu Jintao.

"China takes an interest in Asean and Asean+3, which Malaysia will host next year. With China's participation, we can learn from their experience."

After Beijing, the delegation will visit Shanghai and then leave for Japan.

Asked on his visit to Dublin (headquarters of the European Union) and Russia (the two members of the Quartet), Syed Hamid said it was constructive.

(Syed Hamid is scheduled to visit the other two members of the Quartet, the US and the United Nations next month.)

"We were able to register the importance of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference as a body representing the Islamic Ummah in matters affecting Islamic countries."

He said the EU and Russia had acknowledged the OIC's role.

Syed Hamid said there had been a frank and transparent exchange of views, especially on Palestine.