

Projects to boost regional trade

The Star - 13/11/2007

ADB backing for joint growth areas

By MAZWIN NIK ANIS
mazwin@thestar.com.my

CEBU CITY: A list of projects has been drawn up to bring economic growth to Malaysia and its neighbours in two joint growth areas, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

The Prime Minister said the projects included those in tourism and communications as well as biofuel development from palm oil.

The two joint development areas are the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippine East Asean Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) and the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT).

Abdullah told the Malaysian media here this after attending the BIMP-EAGA and IMT-GT summits yesterday.

The two summits were held together with the Asean Summit.

He said a committee headed by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar tasked with drawing up a roadmap

» The United States should take steps to reduce the number of military personnel«

DATUK SERI ABDULLAH AHMAD BADAWI

for the development of both joint development areas had come up with a recommendation list.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) would be providing financial support and expertise to the projects, he added.

Abdullah said Malaysia had been chosen as the base of the co-ordinating centre for the development of IMT-GT. The centre would be set up in Selangor, he added.

On another matter, Abdullah said increasing American troops in Iraq would only worsen the situation there.

"They should take steps

to reduce the number of military personnel. But instead, the United States has decided to increase the number."

Meanwhile, Asean and China will be signing the Asean-China Trade and Services Agreement today.

The pact, to be signed in the presence of the 10 Asean leaders and Chinese premier Wen Jiabao, will open up China's multi-billion dollar services sector to Asean.

See World Page 31

Asean calls for EU-style bloc



Welcome: Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo greeting Abdullah in Cebu City yesterday. — AP