

Mahathir for 10-day visit to Gulf States on Feb 27

Bahan asal dari Arkib
Negara Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will visit the Gulf States for 10 days next Saturday.

His first stop would be Bahrain, followed by the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Jeddah.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's visit is to strengthen co-operation between Malaysia and the Arab countries, especially in religion, education, commerce and investments.

"We welcome equity participation of the Arab countries, especially in investments in heavy industries," he said.

He told reporters after opening an Umno information course that his visit was a follow up to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's tour of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also said he will be going to Thailand and Bangladesh in early April.

"I have agreed to attend the (Thai) bicentenary celebrations but I am not sure if there will be any (Asean) summit," he said.

"If there is a summit, we have had no invitation for it yet," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

He was referring to a report from Jakarta that he would not be attending the Bangkok summit due to his domestic commitments in April.

Thai Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda had recently proposed an informal meeting of the Asean heads of government to coincide with the 200th anniversary of Bangkok in April.

If the summit is held, it is speculated that Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir would not be attending because Malaysia could be holding its general election then.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also said he planned to visit Japan, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga and Papua New Guinea later this year.

The visits, he said, were in line with the Government's foreign policy of giving priority to Asean, Islamic and non-aligned countries.

Asked if he would be visiting Western countries including Britain, he said: "My visit to the Gulf States can be considered towards the West."

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