

18 JAN 1996

CANADIAN PM ACCORDED OFFICIAL WELCOME AT PARLIAMENT SQUARE

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 18 (Bernama) -- Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien attended an official welcoming ceremony at Parliament Square here this afternoon shortly after arriving for a two-day visit.

The Canadian leader and his wife, Aline, were received at the square by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

Chretien and Dr Mahathir then stood on a dais as the Royal Malaysian Navy band played the national anthems of Malaysia and Canada.

The Canadian leader then inspected a guard of honour mounted by 107 officers and men of the First Battalion Royal Malay Regiment under the command of Mej Nor Azmi Abdul Karim.

Dignitaries comprising ministers and members of the diplomatic corps were then introduced to Chretien.

After the ceremony, both leaders left in a motorcade for the Prime Minister's Department for bilateral talks.

Tonight, Chretien will attend a dinner hosted by Dr Mahathir at his official residence, Sri Perdana.

The visit is to enhance the close political ties and increase trade and investment linkages between the two countries. -- Bernama