

20 DEC 1996

Mahathir-Welcome

INDIA ROLLS RED CARPET WELCOME FOR MAHATHIR

By: Zainoor Sulaiman

NEW DELHI, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who arrived here last night for a four-day official visit, was given a red carpet welcome by the Indian government today.

The official welcoming ceremony took place at Forecourt, Rashtrapati Bhavan, the presidential, administrative and legislative complex.

He was received by Indian Prime Minister Deve Gowda who led the Indian delegation at the welcoming reception.

After inspecting a guard-of-honour, Dr Mahathir was introduced to Indian dignitaries.

The Prime Minister, who was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, later called on Indian Vice-President K.R.Narayanan and his wife, Usha Narayanan, at their residence.

Dr Mahathir later proceeded to Rjaghat, mausoleum of Mahatma Ghandi, the father of Indian independence, where he laid a wreath.

Dr Siti Hasmah meanwhile had a separate programme at the residence of the Malaysian High Commissioner here where she met members of Perwakilan New Delhi

-- the mission's ladies association.

The Prime Minister and his wife later called on Indian President Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma and First Lady Vimala Sharma followed by a luncheon at Rashtrapati Bahvan.

Dr Mahathir is leading a high-level delegation which includes three cabinet members, a deputy minister, senior officials and Malaysian industry leaders.

Members of the official party includes Transport Minister Datuk Seri Ling Liong Sik, Works Minister Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu, Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Law Hieng Ding, Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Leo Michael Toyad, Economic Planning Unit Director-General Tan Sri Abul Hassan Sulaiman and Petronas chairman Tan Sri Aziz Zainal Abidin.

The 20-member Malaysian business delegation comprises chairmen and chief executives including Tan Sri Tajuddin Ramli of Malaysia Airlines, Tan Sri Kishu Tirathrai (Globe Silk Store), Tan Sri Halim Saad (Renong Group), Tan Sri Vincent Tan (Berjaya Group), Tan Sri Dr Mohamed Yusof Hashim (Palm Oil Promotion Council), Datuk Amin Shah (Business Focus), Datuk Abdul Aziz Othman (Bank Bumiputra), Dato Mohamaed Said Mohamaed Ali (Telekom Malaysia Bhd), T.Ananda Krishnan (Binariang) and Datuk Lee Kim Yew (Country Heights). -- BERNAMA

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