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Mahathir-Trinidad

PM ARRIVES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

By: Azman Ujang

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Nov 12 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived in Trinidad and Tobago on Monday night (Tuesday morning Malaysian time) for an overnight visit, his first to the West Indian nation.

He is accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

Dr Mahathir, fresh from a six-day official visit to Guinea and Ghana in west Africa, flew in a private executive jet and made a refuelling stop in Cayenne, the capital of French Guiana in South America.

At Cayenne, he was met on arrival by Malaysian Ambassador to France Mohamed Harun, senior French Guiana officials and Binariang Sdn Bhd chairman Tun Hanif Omar.

Hanif and a 200-member delegation from Malaysia are in French Guiana for Wednesday's launch into orbit of Malaysia's second satellite Measat II, owned by Binariang.

Dr Mahathir, who will witness the lift-off of the satellite scheduled at 7.40pm on Wednesday (6.40am Thursday Malaysian time), will arrive in French Guiana on Tuesday evening.

Soon after arrival in Trinidad and Tobago, he attended a dinner hosted by its Prime Minister Basdeo Panday.

The next day, he will call on President Noor Hasanali before holding talks with his Trinidad and Tobago counterpart.

He will also meet a small group of Malaysian students, most of whom are studying medicine in universities in the country.

In the afternoon, he will visit one of the country's largest companies, Point Lisas Industrial Development Company Limited.

Trinidad and Tobago is a nation made up of two islands in the Caribbean Sea near the northeast coast of South America. The two islands are 32km apart from each other and have a population of 1.2 million.

More than a third of the nation's people have black African ancestry and about a third are descendents of immigrants from India. People of mixed European and black African ancestry plus groups of European and Chinese make up the rest of the population.

English is the country's official language while its economy is based on oil production and refining. -- BERNAMA

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