

02 AUG 1997

Everest-welcome

30,000 WELCOME EVEREST CLIMBERS IN KELANTAN

PASIR MAS, Aug 2 (Bernama) -- The Malaysia-Everest 97 team was given a rousing welcome on arrival here today for a one-day visit to the state today.

Some 30,000 people turned up at the mini stadium here to see their heroes who were earlier paraded through the town.

Soon after arriving at the Sultan Ismail Petra airport in Pengkalan Chepa, Kota baharu at 9am, the 17 climbers were driven here in several Kancil for the colourful procession.

Riding on two elephants, members of the Everest team were escorted by 20 horse riders, 36 bunga mangga carriers and 14 others carrying national, state and Rakan Muda colours.

Present were Youth and Sport Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Shahrizat Jalil and organising committee chairman Datuk Ibrahim Ali who is Pasir Mas MP.

But the two Malaysians who made it to the 8,848 metre summit of the Everest, M. Magendran and N. Mohandas as well as two other climbers, Gary Chong Kim Wah and Mohamed Fauzan Hassan could not be present at the ceremony.

They were attending another function in Kuala Lumpur, organised by the MIC in their honour. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was present.

The four will join the others tonight at a reception at a hotel here.

Shahrizat was impressed with the large turn out. --BERNAMA

ZI ABG