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Mahathir-Kyrgyz

MAHATHIR ARRIVES IN KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

By: Zulkefli Salleh

BISHKEK (Kyrgyz) Sept 11 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived here today to begin a three-day working visit to this Central Asian Republic of Kyrgyz.

Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Datin Dr Siti Hasmah Ali, was met on arrival by President Askar Akayev.

Seven cabinet ministers in his entourage are Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Ling Liong Sik, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, Energy, Telecommunications and Post Minister Datuk Leo Moggie, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik, Agriculture Minister Datuk Sulaiman Daud and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Chong Kah Kiat. Also in the entourage is Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Abu Zahar Ithnin.

A 66-member business delegation also accompanies Dr Mahathir. Among them are Malaysia Mining Corporation Berhad chief executive Tan Sri Datuk Ibrahim Menudin, Group Executive Director of YTL Corporation Bhd Datuk Aripin Mokhtar, Managing Director of Edaran Otomobil Nasional Berhad Datuk Adzmi Abdul Wahab and Datuk Amin Shah Omar Shah, executive director of Business Focus.

This is Dr Mahathir's second visit to Kyrgyz, the first being last year, to follow-up on efforts to establish closer bilateral relations.

The Prime Minister will witness the signing of the Complementary Agreement on Economic Cooperation between the Economic Planning Unit, Malaysia and the Ministry of Finance of Kyrgyz and the agreement between MEC Sales and Services Sdn Bhd and Aziz Ltd for the distribution of MEC products as well as the handing-over of the Ak-Keme Hotel shares between Business Focus Sdn Bhd and Ak-Keme Joint Stock Company.

Dr Mahathir will also hold a delegation meeting with President Akayev during which they will discuss a report on a joint study by the officials of both countries.

In his speech at a dinner hosted by President Akayev, Dr Mahathir said that discussions were being held on how some scientists from Kyrgyz could come to Malaysia and play a role in the development process.

Dr Mahathir also hoped the Malaysian private sector delegation would be able to establish firm linkages with their counterparts here in mining, tourism, and infrastructure development. --BERNAMA

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