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Mahathir-Arrival

MAHATHIR ARRIVES IN MONGOLIA FOR FOUR-DAY VISIT

By: Zulkefli Salleh

ULAN BATOR (Mongolia), Sept 8 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived here today for a four-day official visit to Mongolia to strengthen bilateral ties and enhance economic cooperation.

Dr Mahathir is accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali.

The prime minister's entourage includes Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Minister Datuk Leo Moggie, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik, Agriculture Minister Datuk Dr Sulaiman Daud, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Chong Kah Kiat and Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Abu Zahar Ithnin.

Also accompanying is a 66-member high-powered business delegation led by Malaysia Mining Corporation Berhad chief executive Tan Sri Ibrahim Menudin.

Dr Mahathir was received by Mongolian Prime Minister M. Enkhsaikhan and his wife, E.Shurentsetseg, at the Sukhbaatar Square where an official welcoming ceremony was held an hour after his arrival at the Buyant-Ukhaa International Airport.

The Prime Minister will attend an official dinner tonight hosted by Enkhsaikhan at the Government Guest House.

Tomorrow, Dr Mahathir is scheduled to hold bilateral talks with his Mongolian counterpart and later witness the signing of bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoU).

He will also address Mongolian and Malaysian businessmen at a business luncheon hosted by the Mongolian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Malaysian External Trade Corporation (Matrade).

His itinerary on the third day includes a visit to a tourist resort, Chinggis Khaany Khuree, where he will have the opportunity to witness Mongolian traditional sporting events such as wrestling, archery and horse riding.

On the last day of his visit, Dr Mahathir is tentatively scheduled to be conferred the Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy by the National University of Mongolia.

He is scheduled in the afternoon to depart for the Republic of Kyrgyz for a three-day official visit. -- BERNAMA

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