

25 MAR 1997

MAHATHIR LEAVES FOR OFFICIAL VISIT TO JAPAN

KUALA LUMPUR, March 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad this morning left for a four-day official visit to Japan to explore new avenues of cooperation.

Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, was seen off at the Sultan Abdul Aziz International Airport in Subang by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, several Cabinet ministers and senior government officials.

A 50-member delegation that includes International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz and Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik is also travelling with the Prime Minister.

This is Dr Mahathir's second official visit to Japan since 1983 although he has made numerous trips to Japan, the last being in January to promote the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

Dr Mahathir will have an audience with Emperor Akihito at Akasaka Palace tomorrow followed by official talks with his counterpart Ryutaro Hashimoto.

The Prime Minister will also visit Osaka to meet top Japanese industrialists and Fukuoka where he will address the Second Fukuoka Dialogue. He will focus on multimedia.

Dr Mahathir will leave for home on Saturday from Nagoya after witnessing the naming of a ship belonging to Konsortium Perkapalan by Dr Siti Hasmah.

--BERNAMA

ZAB SK