

10 NOV 1997

Macedonia-Welcome (

OFFICIAL WELCOME FOR PRESIDENT GLIGOROV AT PARLIAMENT SQUARE

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 10 (Bernama) -- President Kiro Gligorov of Macedonia who arrived this morning for a four-day official visit was accorded an official welcome at the Parliament Square here later in the afternoon.

He was welcomed by Yang Di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Najihah and Dr Mahathir's wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali were also present.

President Gligorov is leading a 46-member delegation comprising several ministers, senior government officials and businessmen during the visit to boost political, economic and trade ties between the two countries.

He later inspected a guard of honour mounted by five officers and 31 men from the 1st Battalion Royal Malay Regiment, under the command of Mej Hamdi Abdul Rahman.

President Gligorov was then introduced to Cabinet ministers, senior government officers and foreign diplomats.

On arrival at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport in Subang this morning, he was received by Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, his wife Datin Seri Endon Mahmood and Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik who will be the minister-in-attendance.

Tonight, he will have an audience with Tuanku Ja'afar and Tuanku Najihah, followed by a state banquet.

Malaysia was the first among the Asia-Pacific countries to recognise the former Yugoslav republic in 1992 following its emergence as a free and independent state.

With an area of 25,713 sq km, the landlocked republic has a population of 2.075 million people. -- BERNAMA

WNZ ABG