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Rongji-Arrival

CHINESE PREMIER ARRIVES FOR FIVE-DAY VISIT

PUTRAJAYA, Nov 22 (Bernama) -- Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji, who arrived here today for a five-day official visit, was accorded a ceremonial welcome at Perdana Putra, here.

Zhu and his wife, Lao An, were met on arrival at the ground level of the building by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali.

Also present were Cabinet ministers and members of the diplomatic corps.

At the ceremony, Zhu received a salute from a guard-of-honour mounted by 39 officers and men of the First Battalion Royal Malay Regiment led by Maj Abdul Basit. The national anthems of the two countries were also played.

The ceremonial welcome at the Dataran Perdana had to be cancelled because of heavy rain.

Earlier, Zhu, who is heading a 107-member delegation, was received at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar and Defence Minister Datuk Abang Abu Bakar Mustapha, who is minister-in-attendance.

His delegation includes Foreign Minister Pang Jia Xuan, Agriculture Minister Chen Yao Bang, Minister of Special Assistance Lin Hua Qiu and Vice Governor of the People's Bank of China Yan Hai Wang.

Zhu, leader of the world's most populous nation, is on a tour of four Asean countries, his first as premier. He will also visit the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam.

While here, he will call on Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah and hold talks with Dr Mahathir.

Tomorrow, Zhu will attend a delegation meeting with his Malaysian counterpart and visit the Malaysia Technology Park. He is also scheduled to deliver a keynote address at a luncheon hosted by the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (NCCIM) on Wednesday.

Malaysia is the first Asean country to establish diplomatic ties with Beijing following the late Tun Abdul Razak's visit to China on May 31, 1974.

Dr Mahathir visited China in August this year to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Sino-Malaysia diplomatic relations.

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