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APEC-ATTIRE
APEC LEADERS IN SHOW OF UNITY

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BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- The APEC leaders who began their retreat at the Jerudong Park Polo Club near here, took a 300-metre walk through the driveway of the club for their lunch break wearing their royal 'gift' shirt.

Among the group to emerge from the clubhouse were Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

They were followed by the chief executive of Hong Kong, Tung Chee Hwa, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, Canadian Foreign Minister John Manley, New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid.

President Joseph Estrada of the Philippines was on a golf buggy which took him to the entrance of the road leading to the Royal Brunei Golf and Country Club, the venue for their lunch.

US President Bill Clinton and the rest of the leaders followed except Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai and President of Peru, Alberto Kenyo Fujimori, who were among the last out of the polo club house as they were involved in a bilateral talk.

In an apparent show of unity, the leaders with their tailor-made long sleeves silk shirts in royal blue with contrasting insets and cuffs woven with golden thread, were all smiles when they faced the press photographers.

The shirts, made as special gift from the Sultan, were designed on instructions of the Sultan, came from the Royal Weaving Centre, close to the Jerudong Park.

The design is slightly different for each leader with the APEC2000 logo highlighted in gold.

Helen Clark, the only woman among the leaders, wore a jacket of similar design.

According to APEC press, Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah in introducing the topic at the beginning of the closed door meeting held under tight security, had hoped that APEC would try to ensure that everyone in the region stood to benefit from globalisation.

APEC recognises that people are most valuable asset. Adequate investment in training and education would prepare them for any change and help them maximise their potential to take advantage of the benefits fully from globalisation.

The Sultan also stressed the need for APEC to explain to the people of the Asia-Pacific region on all measures and implementation of APEC to avoid negative perception of globalisation. -- BERNAMA

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