

16 OCT 2000

Edward

BRITISH ROYAL COUPLE TO VISIT MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 16 (Bernama) -- The Earl of Wessex, Prince Edward will visit Malaysia for four days, beginning Oct 22, as an envoy to reinforce the close ties between Britain and Malaysia, British High Commissioner here Graham Fry said.

"The focus of his visit will be on areas of education, young people, media, and the arts. The Earl is also said to be looking forward to introducing Malaysia to his wife," Fry told a media briefing here today.

Prince Edward, the youngest son of Queen Elizabeth II, will be accompanied by his wife the Countess of Wessex, formerly Sophie Rhys-Jones.

The royal couple will have an audience with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Siti Aishah.

They are also scheduled to call on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali and meet Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein.

Fry said the Earl and Countess will visit the new sites of the British-Malaysia Institute in Gombak and there Prince Edward open a multimedia and computer laboratories funded by Rolls Royce and the Standard Chartered Bank.

Prince Edward's itinerary also include visiting the University of Nottingham in Malaysia, opening a seminar on new media at Galeri Petronas and attending a royal charity premiere of Oscar award-winning British film Topsy Turvy.

Not overlooking British commercial interests in Malaysia, the royal couple will attend a reception for the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and Motor Sport Industry Association, whose visit here coincided with that of the royal couple.

The royal couple will visit the Heli-Asia 2000 Exhibition here on Oct 25 before leaving for Brunei on the same day.

This will be Prince Edward's third visit to Malaysia. His previous visit was in 1997 and 1998 in his capacity as the President of the Commonwealth Games Federation.

-- BERNAMA

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