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APEC-Retreat

APEC LEADERS ADJOURN FOR RETREAT

By: Mohamed Kamel Othman

SHANGHAI, Oct 21 (Bernama) -- World leaders attending the Ninth APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting adjourned for their retreat at the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum here today.

Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and fellow leaders, who arrived attired in traditional red and blue coloured Chinese costumes, were greeted by Chinese President Jiang Zemin.

Dr Mahathir's traditional Chinese costume bears a round flower pattern with peonies, a famous Chinese flower, surrounding the four letters "APEC" and the attire consists of a tapestry satin jacket and an off-white silk shirt.

The design retains the style of traditional Chinese garments while giving expression to features of modern wear.

The leaders' meeting is the first top-level multilateral gathering since the United States was hit by terrorist attacks on Sept 11.

Taiwan was not represented at this meeting because of disagreement over the status of Taiwan's proposed representative, vice president Li Yuan-Zu.

At the previous APEC summit, Beijing forced Taiwan to limit its representation to a cabinet minister or a business leader.

Taiwan takes part in APEC meetings as an "economy" under the title "Chinese Taipei" -- an arrangement designed to overcome China's objection to recognition of Taiwan as a separate state.

At the conclusion of the retreat, the leaders' declaration will be read out. Some leaders will depart for home or other destinations today.

The APEC forum comprises Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam.

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