

13 MAY 2001

CASTRO FLIES OFF AFTER ENDING VISIT TO MALAYSIA

SEPANG, May 13 (Bernama) -- Cuban President Fidel Castro left Malaysia today after a three-day visit which further cemented relations between Havana and Kuala Lumpur.

He was seen off at the KL International Airport here by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The special flight carrying Castro and his entourage took off at about 11.15am.

Dr Mahathir earlier made a farewell call on the 74-year old president at a city hotel where he stayed during his first ever visit to Malaysia since assuming power 42 years ago.

While in Malaysia, Castro held discussions with Dr Mahathir and was hosted to a state banquet by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah. The visit was at the invitation of the King.

The Cuban leader also delivered a public lecture on globalisation and enjoyed a panoramic view of Kuala Lumpur when he ascended the world's tallest twin structures, the Petronas Twin Towers.

Malaysia and Cuba are members of the Group of 77 which comprises more than 100 developing countries.

-- BERNAMA

MAM RV RM