

14 MAY 2001

Vajpayee-Welcome

VAJPAYEE ATTENDS OFFICIAL WELCOME CEREMONY AT PUTRAJAYA

PUTRAJAYA, May 14 (Bernama) -- Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee who arrived here yesterday for a four-day visit to Malaysia attended an official welcome ceremony for him here today.

On arrival at the Dataran Putra here, Vajpayee was received by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and other dignitaries.

The ceremony included a guard of honour mounted by 106 officers and men of the First Battalion Royal Malay Regiment. The Royal Malaysian Navy Band was also in attendance.

The Indian Prime Minister then shook hands with Malaysian Cabinet Ministers and members of the foreign diplomatic corps.

Vajpayee then adjourned for talks behind closed doors with Dr Mahathir.

After about 40 minutes they emerged and joined the delegation level meetings between the two countries.

Vajpayee and Dr Mahathir later witnessed the signing of a number of agreements and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between India and Malaysia.

This is Vajpayee's first visit to Malaysia since becoming Prime Minister of India in October 1999.

This evening he will hold talks with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and tonight attend an official dinner in his honour hosted by Dr Mahathir at his official residence, Seri Perdana, here.

-- BERNAMA

JAI NHA AFY AAM