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Mahathir-Visit

BUSY DAY FOR PM ON SECOND DAY OF HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO SOUTH KOREA

By: Amin Husaini Harun

SEOUL, May 23 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had a busy day today, the second day of his three-day official visit to South Korea.

The tight schedule started with Dr Mahathir laying the wreath at the Memorial Tower of the National Memorial.

After the short ceremony, the prime minister and his entourage proceeded to the presidential palace, The Blue House, for the official welcoming ceremony by President Kim Dae-Jung.

In the colourful ceremony, Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Kim, inspected a guard-of-honour mounted by the various police and military units, some of them in traditional military dress of yesteryear.

Dr Mahathir was then introduced to Korean dignitaries and later introduced his delegation members to Kim.

Among them were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, Energy, Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Amar Leo Moggie and Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain Barakbah.

Dr Mahathir is also accompanied by a 97-member business delegation.

After the official welcoming ceremony, Dr Mahathir then signed the Guest Book before proceeding for a restricted meeting with Kim at the Audience Room.

In the restricted meeting, the prime minister was accompanied by Syed Hamid, Rafidah, Moggie, Malaysian Ambassador to Korea Datuk V.Yoogalingam, Foreign Ministry Deputy Secretary General 1 Datuk Abdul Aziz Mohammed and under secretary of the ministry, Secretary Datuk Muhammad Noh.

The meeting at The Blue House ended with a delegation meeting with Dr Mahathir and Kim heading their respective delegations.

His next schedule was the luncheon co-hosted by four major business associations -- Korea Federation of Small and Medium Business, Federation of Korean Industries, Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Korea International Trade Association at the Seoul Hilton.

At the luncheon, Dr Mahathir witnessed the signing of seven memorandums of understanding between five Malaysian business entities and eight Korean partners.

Besides addressing the gathering, calling for greater Malaysia-Korea cooperation in various sectors, he also fielded several questions from the participants.

He later visited the Hyundai-KIA Motor Research and Development Centre at Hanyang, about an hour's drive from here.

After a short briefing, Dr Mahathir and his delegation were taken on a tour of the facilities there. He was also shown the various models of vehicles produced by the two motoring giants, including several that were exported to Malaysia.

From Hanyang, the entourage returned to the official residence at Hotel Shilla for a short rest before proceeding to The Blue House for the state banquet.

The second day visit ended with a media conference by Dr Mahathir attended by about 40 representatives of various foreign and local newspapers and news agencies in Korea.

Tomorrow, the third and final day of his visit, Dr Mahathir will visit the LG Chemical Investment and the Satellite Technology Research Centre

Initiative (SaTReCi), both at Daejon about a 90 minutes' drive from here.  
Dr Mahathir will leave for home from the Chongju International Airport  
at 1pm (noon Malaysian time).

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