

12 DEC 2002

Mahathir-Arrival

DR MAHATHIR ARRIVES IN TOKYO FOR OFFICIAL VISIT

By: Harlina Samson

TOKYO, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived here today for a two-day official visit to Japan.

Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, arrived on a commercial aircraft at Narita Airport where he was met by the Malaysian ambassador to Japan, Datuk Marzuki Mohammad Noor, embassy officials and Japanese ambassador to Malaysia Masaki Konishi.

The visit, at the invitation of Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, is Dr Mahathir's second to Japan this year, the first being in May. The visit this time is to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 'Look East Policy'.

Dr Mahathir and his entourage were then driven to central Tokyo to the Imperial Hotel where he will be staying until Friday.

He was met on arrival at the hotel by Public Service Department (PSD) Director-General Tan Sri Jamaluddin Damanhuri and officials of the embassy and the Prime Minister's Department.

The Prime Minister, who has a very tight schedule, began his programme by receiving Minister of International Trade and Industry of Japan Takeo Hiranuma.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah then had a royal audience with Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko at the Imperial Palace.

At midday, the Prime Minister will attend a private lunch with Nikkei president and chief executive officer Takuhiko Tsuruta at Hotel Okura.

Dr Mahathir also received a brief call by the chairman of Matsushita Electrical Industrial Co Ltd, Datuk Yoichi Morishita.

The Prime Minister will then deliver a keynote address at the 'Look East Policy' seminar where a question-and-answer session will be held.

Later, Dr Mahathir will call on Koizumi at Sori Kantei, the Japanese Prime Minister's office, where both leaders are expected to touch on issues of common interest, bilateral relations, trade and economic matters as well as regional issues.

In the evening, the Prime Minister will be entertained to an official dinner hosted by Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi at the government guest house, Iikura Guest House.

-- BERNAMA

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