

05 AUG 2002  
Mahathir-Akayev  
DR MAHATHIR CALLS ON KYRGYZ PRESIDENT

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 5 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad called on Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev at the hotel where he is staying during his two-day visit here, this morning.

Akayev, who earlier arrived from Langkawi where he attended the Langkawi International Dialogue (LID), is leading a 50-member delegation.

Accompanied by his wife, Mairam Akayeva, the Kyrgyz president's entourage comprises First Deputy Prime Minister Kurmanbek Osmonov, several Cabinet ministers, senior government officials and business people.

Dr Mahathir was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, during the 30-minute meeting.

Also present were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar and Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob who is minister-in-attendance.

Akayev's visit, his second after 1995, is aimed at renewing personal ties with Dr Mahathir as well as enhancing bilateral ties and economic cooperation between Malaysia and the Kyrgyz Republic.

Syed Hamid told Bernama afterward that Dr Mahathir and Akayev discussed various bilateral issues and development in Malaysia and the republic.

"Dr Mahathir and Akayev exchanged views and the Kyrgyz president stated that he is impressed with Malaysia's achievement," he said.

The leaders are scheduled to hold formal talks this afternoon when they meet in Putrajaya.

Syed Hamid also said that Akayev stated that his attendance at the LID was most beneficial as he had been able to participate instead of just being an observer.

The Kyrgyz president and his wife were accorded an official welcome on their arrival at the Parliament Square here.

He was met by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail, the Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Fauziah Tengku Abdul Rashid, Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah.

The national anthems of both countries were played and a 21-gun salute was fired during the ceremony.

Akayev also inspected a guard-of-honour mounted by 107 officers and men of the Royal Malay Regiment led by Mej Hamdan Musa. The band of the Royal Armour Corps led by Kapt Jailani Mohamed Okhtat was in attendance.

He was also introduced to the Cabinet ministers and heads of foreign mission here.

Tonight, Akayev and his wife are scheduled to call on the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and later attend a state banquet at Istana Negara.

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