

23 SEP 2003

Mahathir-Arrival

DR MAHATHIR ARRIVES IN SWEDEN FOR THREE-DAY VISIT

By: Jackson Sawatan

STOCKHOLM, Sept 23 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived in this capital city of Sweden Monday to begin a three-day official visit to the country.

The special Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) aircraft carrying Dr Mahathir and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali landed at the Arlanda International Airport at 9.30pm local time (3.30am MST Tuesday).

Chief of Protocol of Sweden's Foreign Ministry Karin Ehnbohm-Palmquist and Malaysian ambassador to Sweden Jasmi Mohamed Yusoff boarded the aircraft to welcome them.

Upon disembarkation, Dr Mahathir was greeted by Sweden's Defence Minister Leni Bjorklund as well as Swedish ambassador to Malaysia Bruno Beijer.

The Malaysian delegation to Sweden comprises Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak; Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin; Energy, Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Amar Leo Moggie; Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Law Hieng Ding; National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman, senior government officials and captains of industry.

Dr Mahathir's schedule here begins at 8am local time with a pre-council meeting followed by a visit to the Karolinska Institutet, a leading medical institute in Sweden. He will be briefed on the institute by its dean of research, Prof Jan Carlstedt-Duke.

In the meantime, Dr Siti Hasmah will be making a parallel visit to other facilities of the institute.

After the visit, Dr Mahathir is scheduled to attend a bilateral delegation meeting with Prime Minister Goran Persson followed by lunch at the official residence of the Swedish Prime Minister.

After lunch, Dr Mahathir will visit the Ericsson Complex in Kista, near here, where he will meet its president and chief executive officer, Carl-Henric Svanberg.

Dr Mahathir and his delegation will be given a presentation on the future of mobile communications by Ericsson's vice-president and general manager for research and development Haker Eriksson, as well as on the future of network-based defence by Lt-Gen Johan Kihl of the Swedish armed forces.

Dr Mahathir will also meet three Malaysian Ericsson employees whom he spoke to briefly on the telephone during the recent opening ceremony of the Ericsson Complex in Cyberjaya.

After the Ericsson Complex visit, Dr Mahathir will proceed to the Kungliga Slottet or The Royal Palace for a private audience with King Carl XVI Gustaf.

He will later view the Swedish-made prototype patrol boat IC 15 M at a jetty in front of the Grand Hotel, here.

This will be followed by a series of meetings with Swedish captains of industry. He will later attend dinner hosted by Investor AB, the largest listed industrial holding company in the Nordic region.

Dr Mahathir is scheduled to leave for New York Wednesday morning.

-- BERNAMA

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