

20 JAN 2003

Mahathir-Departure

DR MAHATHIR LEAVES FOR FOUR-DAY VISIT TO LEBANON, EGYPT

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 20 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad left here today for a four-day official visit to Lebanon and Egypt.

Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, departed from the Royal Malaysian Air Force station in Subang near here at 8.25am.

Among those present to send them off were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his wife, Datin Seri Endon Mahmood, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

During his visit to Lebanon today and tomorrow, the prime minister is scheduled to call on his Lebanese counterpart, Rafic Hariri, in Beirut to exchange views on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Both prime ministers are expected to witness the signing of documents for cooperation in various fields.

Dr Mahathir will also address Lebanese parliamentarians, state dignitaries and corporate leaders at a luncheon hosted by Hariri.

In the Egyptian capital of Cairo, Dr Mahathir is scheduled to call on President Hosni Mubarak and Prime Minister Dr Atef Muhammad Muhammad Ebeid to discuss a similar agenda.

The talks will cover Malaysia's hosting of the 13th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit from Feb 20-25 and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Summit from Oct 16-18.

Dr Mahathir will also meet the Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar University, Dr Mohamed Sayed Tantawi, and is expected to deliver an open lecture to international students, scholars and academicians on "Muslim Unity in the Face of Challenges and Threats".

-- BERNAMA

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