

21 OCT 2003

Mahathir-Arrival

DR M ARRIVES IN JOGJAKARTA FOR ASEAN ENGINEERING AWARD

By: Openg Onn

JOGJAKARTA, Oct 21 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad arrived here tonight for a brief visit to receive a Distinguished Honorary Fellow Award from the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organisation (AFEEO) in conjunction with its conference tomorrow.

The special Royal Malaysian Airforce (RMAF) aircraft ferrying him and his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali touched down at the Adisucipto Airport on the outskirts of this ancient city, at about 8.50 pm (9.50 pm Malaysian time).

Flying with him from Bangkok after attending the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) was Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar.

Indonesia's Energy and Mines Minister, Purnomo Yusgiantoro, was on hand to receive the couple.

Works Minister Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu, who arrived earlier today, Malaysia's Ambassador to Indonesia, Datuk Hamidon Ali, and several local officials, were also at the airport to welcome the Prime Minister.

The AFEEO will hold its two-day 21st conference beginning tomorrow, which among others, would discuss various issues affecting ASEAN engineers like the standardisation and certification programme for its members.

At the conference, more than 200 delegates from all the 10 ASEAN member countries and observers from Japan, South Korea, India, Hong Kong, the United States, Canada and Australia will have the chance to hear remarks from Dr Mahathir, a leader who has been dubbed as an icon in the world political stage.

The award will be a special gift to him for his "invaluable service" in the development of the engineering profession in South East Asia.

It is even more fitting as the award ceremony will not only be held at this Indonesian provincial city of Jogjakarta, in the central part of Java Island, the former seat and centre of three world major civilisations - Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam, but it also comes ahead of his retirement at the end of this month after leading Malaysia as Prime Minister for the last 22 years.

Dr Mahathir will also have a special interview carried live by a local television station, after the award ceremony.

In the afternoon he will continue his journey to Timor Leste for a two-day visit before going to Papua New Guinea.

-- BERNAMA

OPP SSA AO