

**King Arrives In Christchurch, First Stop On Antarctica Visit  
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CHRISTCHURCH, Nov 20 (Bernama) -- Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin arrived here, today, on the first stop of his five-day working visit to Antarctica.

He was welcomed by Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker and his wife Joanna Nicholls-Parker, Malaysian High Commissioner to New Zealand Datuk Mazlan Muhammad and senior High Commission officials, at Christchurch International Airport about 9.25 am local time (4.45 am Malaysian).

The King was accompanied by Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili, Academy of Sciences Malaysia Antarctica Taskforce chairman Tan Sri Salleh Mohd Nor and National Antarctica Research Centre director Prof Datuk Dr Azizan Abu Samah.

Tuanku Mizan was then accorded a ceremonial Maori welcome at their traditional 'meeting house', after which he met briefly with several World War 11 veterans who had served in Malaya (at the time) before proceeding to Peppers Clearwater Resort.

New Zealand's Science and Innovation Minister, Wayne Mapp will host Tuanku Mizan at an official dinner later tonight.

Tuanku Mizan is scheduled to depart for Scott Base tomorrow and also include a visit to the nearby United State's McMurdo Station, both located on McMurdo Sound, Antarctica.

Scott Base is a research facility operated by New Zealand and McMurdo Station is the continent's largest science base.

Malaysia's involvement with Antarctica began when Malaysia, Antigua and Barbuda highlighted the Antarctica issue at the United Nations General Assembly in 1983.

A cabinet approval in 1997 set off Malaysia's scientific research in the continent and as of last year, seven institutions of higher learning have conducted 62 expeditions, involving 60 researchers, said an earlier MOSTI statement.

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