

**Najib returns after three-nation visit**  
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak returned to the country today after an eight-day official visit abroad which took him to Turkmenistan, the United Kingdom and Italy.

Najib, who was accompanied by his wife Rosmah Mansor, flew in to the KL international airport in a special aircraft at 9.45 am.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein were among 3,000 people who greeted Najib upon his return.

Najib began a two-day visit to Turkmenistan on July 11 at the invitation of President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov.

Both leaders officially opened the Petronas Gas terminal in Kiyanli, Turkmenbasy, about 600km from the capital, Ashgabat.

After the visit to Turkmenistan, Najib flew to London for a four-day official visit to step up relations between Malaysia and the United Kingdom.

The prime minister met with UK leaders of government and industry during the visit, which was at the invitation of British Prime Minister David Cameron.

Najib and Rosmah had an audience with Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace (right).

The prime minister then left for Italy for a two-day visit beginning July 17.

His itinerary included a call on Pope Benedict XVI and Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican Secretary of State, at Castel Gandolfo near Rome (left).

This was the second meeting between a Malaysian prime minister and the pope. Former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad had called on Pope John Paul II in June 2002.

Najib took the opportunity to discuss with Pope Benedict XVI the Global Movement of the Moderates initiated by him (Najib) to counter extremism.

The prime minister is not likely to have much rest following his return as a tight programme awaits.

He is scheduled to go on a walkabout in Subang Perdana, attend Friday prayers at the Masjid Subang Perdana and attend a luncheon with the people at SK Jalan U3, Subang Perdana.

- Bernama