

Najib Meets Pope Benedict XVI
Malaysianmirror.com
July 19, 2011

ROME -- Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak on Monday met with Pope Benedict XVI at the Pope's summer residence at the Apostolic Palace in Castel Gandolfo, outside Rome.

Najib's audience with Pope Benedict took place soon after his arrival at the palace overlooking a beautiful lake on a hot Italian summer day.

Following the private meeting, Najib introduced members of his entourage, including his wife Rosmah Mansor, to the Pope.

Najib later presented the Pope with gifts in the form of a book titled "Najib" and a framed songket embroidery.

Both of them were later joined by Rosmah and members of the Malaysian delegation for a group photograph.

Najib was then ushered into a separate room for a delegation meeting with Secretary of State of the Holy See, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

Najib brought along with him a multi-faith entourage including Ministers in the Prime Minister's Department Dr Koh Tsu Koon and Jamil Khir Baharom, and Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Bernard Dompok.

They were joined by National Fatwa Council chairman Prof Dr Abdul Shukor Husin and Archbishop Murphy Nicholas Xavier Pakiam.

It was the second meeting between a Malaysian Prime Minister and the Pope after the one involving former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Pope John Paul in June 2002.

The Pope is the ruler of both Vatican City State and Holy See.

The Holy See is the universal government of the Catholic Church and operates from Vatican City State, a sovereign, independent territory of 0.44 sq km.

(Bernama)

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