

Newspaper	The Star
Date	28/4/2014

Ties with US enter new phase

The Star - 28/4/2014

Our continents share an ocean, now for common policy, says Najib

President Obama



IN MALAYSIA April 26-28, 2014

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia and the United States have entered a new phase in their bilateral relationship with both committed to work closer on the economy, security, education and science and technology.

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said US President Barack Obama's visit to the country had provided a boost to the already strong relationship.

"We have set the stage for a new phase in Malaysia-US ties, one based on greater cooperation needed to face challenges of our times.

"Together, we will lay a firm foundation for further cooperation. We are closer now than ever before," he said at a joint press conference with Obama at Seri Perdana here yesterday after their delegation-level talks.

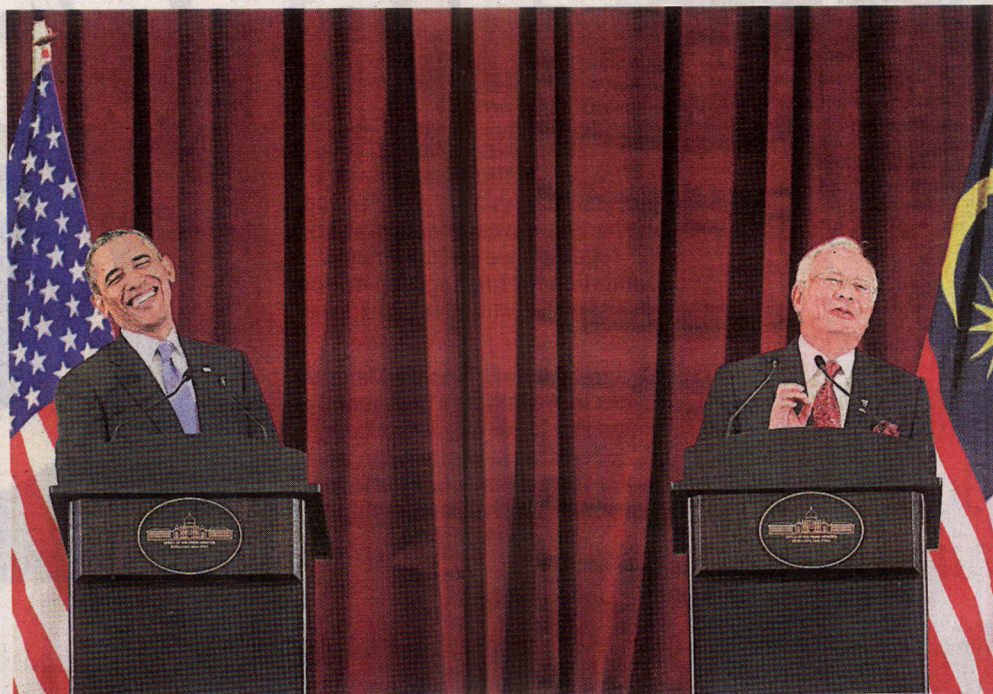
Prior to the meeting, Najib and Obama held a four-eyed discussion that lasted over 30 minutes.

Malaysia, Najib said, welcomed the United States' contribution to peace, stability and prosperity in Asia.

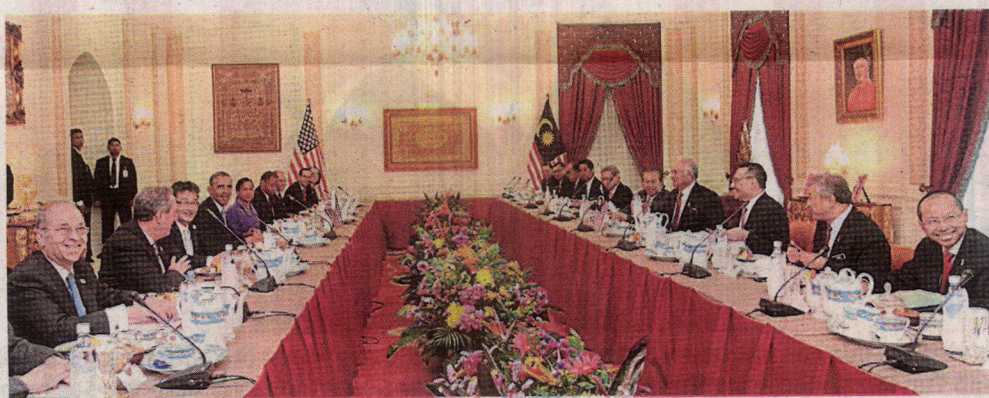
"Our continents share an ocean; we should be connected by a common policy, too. We believe all parties should share in Asia's remarkable growth story, provided they also share a commitment to the peace upon which it depends," he said, adding that Malaysia had always been a bridge between peoples and cultures.

"We have long known the benefit of cooperation across borders and recognised the power of shared prosperity," he stressed.

Najib said Malaysia's relationship with the US was valued as the country prepared to assume the chair-



In stitches: Obama and Najib having a light moment during the press conference in Putrajaya. — AP



High-level meeting: Obama and Najib sitting down with ministers during the bilateral meeting at Kompleks Sri Perdana in Putrajaya. — AZHAR MAHFOF / The Star

manship of Asean and its bid for a non-permanent seat in the United Nations' Security Council.

Najib also said Malaysia had played its role in the fight against terrorism by denying Al-Qaeda and its affiliates a possible foothold in the southern Philippines.

On the South China Sea issues, Najib said he and Obama stressed the importance of upholding univer-

sally recognised principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

At the start of the conference, Najib took the opportunity to elaborate on the long-standing Malaysia-US ties, with the establishment of diplomatic relations on the day of Malaysia's independence in 1957.

Referring to the first visit by an

American president to Malaysia in 1966, Najib said: "Today, Mr President, you see not rubber trees as Lyndon B. Johnson did, but soaring skyscrapers.

"They are testament to the transformation that's taking place here in Malaysia.

"On this journey, we're thankful for the United States' hand of friendship," he said.