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King Salman here for state visit

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> Monarch arrives with 600-strong delegation comprising royal household members, Cabinet ministers

SEPANG: Malaysia rolled out the red carpet for King Salman Abdulaziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia as he arrived here yesterday for a four-day state visit, Bernama reported.

On hand to receive him at Bunga Raya Complex at the KL International Airport were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak and Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, who is also minister-in-attendance.

He was accompanied by a 600-strong delegation, comprising members of the royal household and Cabinet ministers.

King Salman's visit is at the invitation of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Muhammad V.

At a special ceremony in Istana Negara last night, Sultan Muhammad V bestowed the nation's highest award, the Darjah Utama Seri Mahkota Negara, to the visiting monarch.

In his address at a state banquet in honour of King Salman, the Yang-di-Pertuan Agong called for Malaysia and Saudi Arabia, as members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, to cooperate in resolving issues facing Muslims.

King Salman said Riyadh is prepared to support initiatives



Najib accompanying King Salman off the tarmac upon the latter's arrival at the KL International Airport yesterday.

undertaken by Malaysia to help fellow Muslims.

"We want to stress that generally, the Saudi Arabian government will always assist in whatever matter to benefit Muslims and help Muslims universally.

"We are ready to extend assistance and all resources that we have to help Malaysia realise its efforts to help other Muslims," he said.

Also present at the banquet were Najib and wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, Deputy Prime

Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Cabinet ministers and former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

In a tweet earlier, Najib said he is happy with King Salman's visit, adding that he last met the king in March in Riyadh and was

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grateful for the warm hospitality extended to him.

Saudi Arabia is Malaysia's second largest trading partner in the Middle East, with trade between the two countries showing an increase of 19.8% last year, totalling RM13.12 billion.