

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	17/09/2017B

# NAJIB MAKES HIS MARK IN WHITE HOUSE VISIT

NST-17/9/2017  
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His groundbreaking meeting with Trump proves to be a huge triumph

**W**ITH his landmark White House visit closely watched by the US media, Datuk Seri Najib Razak confided later that he was caught off-guard when Donald J. Trump suddenly called in journalists before his bilateral talks with the US president.

**One of the strong messages emerging from Najib's US visit was that Malaysia is now a force to be reckoned with as a serious global investor, with portfolio investments even in the US capital market.**

Anyway, the Malaysian leader was in a very good form and he looked very composed. He spoke in a clear voice in response to the welcoming remarks by his host as TV cameras and long boom mics captured his rare moment.

By all accounts, Najib's groundbreaking visit to the White House proved to be a huge triumph, which reflected not just his standing as a Malaysian leader but also as a statesman championing issues, such as the Rohingya and the fight against terrorism.

"The truth is that this visit is a

coup," said one journalist covering the trip.

"The PM has been bold, talking about IMDB and other matters to set the record straight."

The impact of his US visit, and later his stop at 10 Downing Street to meet British Prime Minister Theresa May, was very clear.

Until Najib met Trump, the world's superpower had been silent on the plight of the Rohingya.

After raising the issue in the White House, Washington began taking a stronger stance as evidenced by US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's comments the day after.

He said Myanmar's democracy was facing a "defining moment".

"I think it is important that the global community speak out in support of what we all know the expectation is for the treatment of people regardless of their ethnicity," Tillerson, who attended the meeting with Trump and Najib, said.

"This violence must stop, this persecution must stop," he said.

And like when Najib met Trump, he offered May a Malaysian value proposition.

And she ended up asking him

about geopolitics.

"No doubt at all who was the more senior and knowledgeable of the two, and who needed who more," said one of Najib's aides who attended the meeting.

Post-White House visit, there had been very positive vibes in the Malaysian camp and the business fraternity.

The prime minister was in high spirits well after the talks with Trump, who once played golf with Najib, and proved very receptive to the Malaysian leader.

He also broke with convention to see the prime minister off to his car on his way out.

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed was also gushing with positivity, and likewise our new envoy to the US, Tan Sri Zulhasnan Rafique.

One of the strong messages emerging from Najib's US visit was that Malaysia is now a force to be reckoned with as a serious global investor, with portfolio investments even in the US capital market.

"The prime minister has broken the barrier and minds of those in the box of 'jaguh kampung'," said one government of-

ficial who accompanied him.

We are also one of the world's top trading nations, including enjoying a huge trade surplus with the US.

For the first seven months of 2017, Malaysia imported only US\$7.8 billion from US while exporting US\$21 billion, giving a trade surplus of US\$13.2 billion.

EPF, which at the end of last year had 29 per cent of its investments overseas and had said that overseas investments outperformed local investments in the past two years, already had US\$7 billion in investments in US bonds and shares, and may invest another US\$3 billion to US\$4 billion.

By the way, what is wrong with Malaysia Airlines ordering Boeing's super modern 787 Dreamliner and Boeing 737 MAX planes in order to help turn around the struggling national airline?

Don't forget, Boeing also invests in Malaysia through a joint venture with Hexcel, USA, to manufacture composites for secondary structures of commercial aircraft.

The plant is located at Bukit Kayu Hitam Industrial Estate in Kedah.