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White House meeting a resounding success

Fruitful talks on trade deals and counter-terrorism

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MALAYSIA'S relationship with the new US administration under President Donald Trump is off to a good start with trade deals in the wings and a promise to work together in counter-terrorism.

Trump said it was a great honour to have Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak in the United States and in the White House, in his remarks at the start of their delegation meeting on Tuesday.

Najib, who was invited to the United States by the White House, is no stranger to Trump as they had met and played golf a few years ago.

But this is the first time Trump has hosted Najib as President and, going by the treatment given, one senior Malaysian official in the meeting at the White House declared the trip "a huge success".

The meeting is significant as this is the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Trump announced large trade deals, including the purchase of Boeing jets worth between US\$10bil and US\$20bil (about RM42bil to RM84bil).

"Malaysia is a massive investor in the United States in the form of

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stocks and bonds, and the stock exchange.

"And they have to be very happy because we're hitting new highs on almost a weekly basis. We're very proud of our stock market and what's happened since I became President, so I congratulate you on those investments," Trump said.

Flanked by his senior Cabinet members and advisers, including Vice-President Mike Pence, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and senior adviser Jared Kushner, Trump acknowledged Malaysia's role in countering terrorism which was important to the United States.

Trump also praised Najib for his tough stand on the Islamic State (IS) group and for cutting economic ties with North Korea.

"He's been very, very strong on terrorism in Malaysia and a great supporter from that standpoint. So

that's a very important thing to the United States," Trump said.

Najib, who was invited by Trump to say a few words before the start of the delegation meeting, said Malaysia intended to increase the number of Boeing planes purchased by Malaysia Airlines Bhd.

"We are committed to 25 737-MAX 10 planes and eight 787 Dreamliners. There is a strong probability, not possibility, that we will add 25 more 737-MAX 10s in the near future," the Prime Minister said.

With the additional purchase, the deal would be worth over US\$10bil within five years, he added.

Najib revealed that the Employees Provident Fund, with US\$7bil (RM29.3bil) investment in the United States currently, intended to invest an additional US\$3bil to US\$4bil (RM12.6bil to RM16.76bil) to support infrastructure redevelopment in the United States.

Khazanah Nasional planned to increase its investment in high-tech firms, in addition to the US\$400mil (RM1.67bil) invested so far.

Najib reaffirmed Malaysia's commitment to fight terror groups such as IS, al-Qaeda and Abu Sayyaf.

"They are the enemy of the United



States, they are also the enemy of Malaysia. We will do our part to ensure our part of the world is safe.

"We will also contribute in terms of the ideological warfare because you need to win hearts and minds.

"And the key to it is to support moderate and progressive Muslim regimes and governments around the world, because that is the true face of Islam; that is the authentic

face of Islam.

"The more you align with progressive and moderate regimes, the better it would be in terms of winning the hearts and minds of the Muslim world," said Najib.

Watch the video
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