

# PM GIVEN HONOUR OF ENTERING KAABAH

Access given to heads of state, govt Leaders and eminent Muslim figures



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MAKKAH

PRIME Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, on an official visit to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, was given the honour of entering the Kaabah after performing the umrah on Saturday night.

Accompanied by his wife, Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman, Muhyiddin completed the *taxwaf* and other umrah rituals in Masjidil Haram (Grand Mosque) at 9.56pm (Saudi time).

Apart from being honoured with entering the Kaabah, an exclusive access given to heads of state, government leaders and eminent Muslim figures, Muhyiddin and his wife were also given the opportunity to kiss the *Hajar al-Aswad* (Black Stone), said to have been brought from paradise and given to Prophet Ibrahim to be placed at the corner of the Kaabah.

From here, Muhyiddin and Noorainee travelled later to Madinah to visit the Prophet's



Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and his wife, Puan Sri Noorainee Abdul Rahman (right), performing umrah rituals at the Grand Mosque in Makkah on Saturday, *bernama pic*

Mosque, the second most holiest site in Islam after the Grand Mosque.

Muhyiddin and his wife had earlier arrived at King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah at 5.31pm (Saudi time) for the four-day official visit to Saudi Arabia.

They were greeted upon arrival by Prince Mishaal Majid Abdulaziz Al Saud, the governor of Jeddah; Malaysian ambassador to Saudi Arabia Datuk Abd Razak Abdul Wahab and his wife, Datin Nor Asimah Petah; and Consulate-General of Malaysia in

Jeddah 'Alauddin Mohd Nor and his wife, Najwa Hasbullah.

Muhyiddin's visit to Saudi Arabia (March 6 to 9) is at the invitation of King Salman Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

He is the first foreign head of government to be invited by King Salman to undertake an official visit to the kingdom following the Al Ula Conference on Jan 5.

The official programme tomorrow will take place at Al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh.

It includes an official welcoming ceremony with a virtual audience with King Salman, a meet-

ing with Crown Prince Mohammed Salman, who is also Saudi deputy prime minister and defence minister, a ceremony to sign a memoranda of understanding, and an official luncheon.

Malaysia and Saudi Arabia were expected to discuss efforts to strengthen bilateral ties and explore new areas of cooperation, with the view of elevating the partnership to a strategic level.

The visit also hoped to strengthen cooperation between both countries in performing the haj and umrah.

They included resolving issues on umrah and haj quotas, as well the formalisation of the "Mecca Road Service" initiative, which would ease and simplify the pre-clearance process for Malaysian pilgrims.

From Saudi Arabia, Muhyiddin will fly to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) tomorrow to meet Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed Zayed Al Nahyan and UAE Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed Rashid Al Maktoum, who is also the ruler of Dubai.

Muhyiddin is scheduled to conclude his visit to both countries on Thursday.