

Prime Minister On Official Visit To Saudi Arabia Saturday
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JEDDAH, June 5 (Bernama) - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak will start a three-day official visit to Saudi Arabia from Saturday at the invitation of King Salman Abdulaziz al-Saud.

The Malaysian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Zainol Rahim Zainuddin said the visit aims to enhance long-standing ties between the two leaders and discuss matters related to the Malaysian pilgrim quota.

"It's a special message. Everyone knows about our request. Malaysia will continue to request for a higher quota."

Zainol Rahim said this will be the first official meeting of the two leaders since King Salman was crowned earlier this year.

"It's a tribute to Malaysia and the prime minister because King Salman was only crowned earlier this year. The prime minister is one of the heads of state invited to hold talks with King Salman.

"To be invited by the king in a short time after being crowned really indicates how close we are," he told Malaysian journalists covering the official visit of the prime minister, here today.

Zainol Rahim said these developments show the close ties between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia who considers Malaysia as an important country not only in Southeast Asia but globally.

Najib will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and Minister in the Prime Ministers Department, Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharum.

Najib, who is scheduled to arrive Saturday, will perform the 'umrah' and visit Al Mashaaer Al Mugaddasah station in Makkah on Sunday.

The station which operates only during the haj season can handle 100,000 passengers.

Prasarana Malaysia Bhd (Prasarana) won a bid as 'shadow operator' of first phase of Makkah Metro Public Transport System (Makkah Metro).

Zainol Rahim said the award of this project clearly shows Saudi Arabia's confidence in the ability of Malaysians.

"We have several investments in Saudi Arabia but the award shows how strong and

credible our people are in terms of how they can manage several projects and indicate the confidence of the world community towards Malaysia.

"These developments may also attract the attention of Saudi investors to invest in Malaysia and see what Malaysia can offer. This would allow Saudi investors to look at areas they could invest," he added.

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