

Malaysia-Saudi ties at highest level, says Najib
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Saudi Arabian King Salman Abdulaziz Al-Saud views relations between Malaysia and the kingdom as being at the highest level and set to deepen.

This acknowledgment was conveyed to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak who had an audience with the Saudi monarch at the latter's residence on Wednesday.

"What the king told me was that he is very satisfied with how things stand in terms of ties between our two countries," Najib told a media conference Wednesday night as he concluded a working visit to Saudi Arabia which began on February 29.

He said King Salman was impressed with what Malaysia had achieved as a country, something that Saudi Arabia held in high regard.

Najib said on behalf of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, he had extended an invitation for the Saudi king to make a state visit Malaysia.

The prime minister added that he was astonished to see a sizeable number of Saudi royals, Cabinet members and high-ranking military officials at the luncheon following his audience with King Salman.

He said this could signal the level of importance attached by the Saudis to ties between Riyadh and Kuala Lumpur.

The prime minister said he harboured hopes that the special relations between the two countries would translate into aspects which could further benefit Malaysians.

During the audience, Najib said he had expressed Malaysia's appreciation over the hospitality and assistance accorded by Saudi Arabia to Malaysian haj and umrah pilgrims.

He noted that Malaysia had benefited from special considerations on these matters.

The prime minister said links between the two countries had evolved to reflect current concerns in the form of security threats posed by militant group Isis, not only to Saudi Arabia but also Malaysia and the Southeast Asian region and beyond.

"I shared with King Salman about how Isis had managed to attract to its cause Malaysians in Malaysia as well as Malaysians who have joined the group in Syria and Iraq," he said.

Najib also said Saudi Arabia was a land of opportunity as many Malaysians had found employment there.

"Many of our professionals have secured well-paying jobs here, and this can only be

beneficial to Malaysia, generally speaking," he said. – Bernama, March 3, 2016.

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