

Malaysia, Saudi Arabia Enter New Era Of Bilateral Relations

KUALA LUMPUR, March 1 (Bernama) -- The just-concluded maiden state visit of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud has raised Saudi Arabia's relations with Malaysia to the highest level.

It affirmed Saudi Arabia's strong commitment to strengthen bilateral ties with Malaysia and elevate the two countries to a new era of relationship.

Talks during the visit, which came at the invitation of Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Muhammad V, touched on many issues including the Haj quota for Malaysia and centred on the unity of the Islamic world.

King Salman, who is Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, agreed to consider a request by Malaysia to have the annual quota of Haj pilgrims from Malaysia raised to 30,000.

The Saudi King also stated that Saudi Arabia was prepared to support the initiatives undertaken by Malaysia to help fellow Muslims.

Malaysia was King Salman's first country of visit in Southeast Asia since his ascension to the throne in 2015.

The two countries also enhanced bilateral cooperation in various fields, including in scientific and educational cooperation, which will pave the way for further cooperation in the areas of knowledge, experience exchange and the transfer of technology.

The two countries also brought their bilateral cooperation in the field of labour and human resources to the next level, with the aim to intensify training programmes and exchange of experiences in the field of occupational safety and health, information and statistics related to the labour market.

The visit was also significant to economic cooperation between the two countries, and saw Saudi Arabia's Aramco taking up a 50 per cent stake in the refinery and cracker assets at the Refinery and Petrochemical Integrated Development (Rapid) project in Pengerang, Johor, in a multi-billion dollar deal with Petronas.

During the four-day visit from Sunday, the Saudi King and his 600-strong entourage visited, among other places, the Parliament building and Istana Negara.

King Salman was also conferred an Honorary of Doctor of Letters degree by Universiti Malaya and an Honorary Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science (Islam and Wasatiyyah) degree as well as a Lifetime Outstanding Achievement Award by the International Islamic University of Malaysia.

This is the third visit by a Saudi King to Malaysia. The last state visit by a King of Saudi Arabia to Malaysia was in 2006, by the late King Abdullah Abdulaziz Al-Saud. The late King Faisal Abdulaziz Al-Saud made a state visit to Malaysia in 1970.

Summing up King Salman 's visit, Defence Minister and Minister-in-Attendance Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said the visit was a successful and memorable moment for the two nations which enjoyed trust, comfort and relationship at the highest level.

"I believe we are into a new era of bilateral relations and the momentum can be driven with what was agreed upon during the visit," he said to reporters.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman and Hishammuddin were at the Bunga Raya Complex of KL International Airport to bid farewell to King Salman.

The Saudi King and his entourage flew to Jakarta for a three-day state visit to Indonesia.

-- BERNAMA

© 2017 BERNAMA. All Rights Reserved. [Disclaimer](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Security Policy](#)

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1333934>