

## **Bernama, Saudi Press Agency Sign MoU On News Exchange**

PUTRAJAYA, Feb 27 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian National News Agency (Bernama) and Saudi Press Agency (SPA) Monday signed a memorandum of understanding on news exchange to boost cooperation and strengthen understanding between the peoples and governments of Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

The MoU seeks to provide the two agencies with greater outreach in news coverage without the need to have offices or correspondents in either country.

The signing of the MoU at Seri Perdana, the official residence of the Malaysian Prime Minister, was witnessed by the King of Saudi Arabia, King Salman Abdulaziz Al Saud, and Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

King Salman, who is also the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, is on a four-day state visit to Malaysia from Sunday at the invitation of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Sultan Muhammad V.

Bernama general manager Datuk Zulkefli Salleh and SPA president Abdullah bin Fahd Al Hussien signed the MoU on behalf of Bernama and SPA, respectively.

Bernama, in a press release, said the agreement will be a platform for it to receive and disseminate reports on events in Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arab world.

It said that for Bernama, and Malaysia in general, news from Saudi Arabia and the Arab world is much sought after as thousands of Malaysians descend on Saudi Arabia for the haj and umrah annually while many others also visit the other Arab countries, it said.

Saudi Arabia, home to two of the holiest sites in Islam, is also seen by Muslims in Malaysia as a nation of interest to them, it said.

"The religious scholarships, the edicts and the happenings relating to Islam in a country located in a region seen as the cradle of Islam is very much relevant to Malaysia," it said.

On the other hand, Bernama said, the MoU will provide for Malaysia, Asean and Southeast Asia to be on SPA's spotlight.

The cooperation provides a win-win situation for the two sides and opens a new avenue for them in covering more geographical regions without additional financial commitment, it said.

Bernama said it is also part of the Islamic world's media networking and, in the long run, will help provide a stronger voice for Muslims

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