

King Salman Responds Positively To Request On Haj Quota - Najib

PUTRAJAYA, Feb 27 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia had responded positively to a request to have the annual quota of Haj pilgrims from Malaysia raised to 30,000.

The Prime Minister said that during the talks between the delegations of the two countries, King Salman informed that his government would have to give an in-depth consideration to the request.

"For King Salman, as the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the management of Haj pilgrims is a very important matter and is always given consideration by the Saudi Arabian government," he said.

Najib spoke at a media conference after the bilateral talks held at Seri Perdana, the official residence of the Prime Minister, here.

King Salman is on a four-day state visit to Malaysia from yesterday at the invitation of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Sultan Muhammad V.

This year, the Saudi Arabian government restored the Malaysian Haj pilgrim quota to the original 27,800 after it was reduced to 22,320 in 2013 due to the development works at the Masjidil Haram.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom had reportedly said that the Malaysian government had requested a raise in the quota to 30,000 due to the increasing number of Malaysians going on the pilgrimage.

Najib also said that King Salman agreed to consider a Malaysian request to build two pilgrim centres close to the Masjidil Haram in Makkah and Masjidil Nabawi in Madinah.

"Their laws prohibit foreigners from buying land. We may have to consider a long-term lease. This will be looked into by the Saudi Arabian government," he said.

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