

Bahrain King To Visit Malaysia From April 30 To May 3

PUTRAJAYA, April 28 (Bernama) -- King Hamad Isa Al Khalifa will make a historic visit to Malaysia as the first Ruler of Bahrain to come here since both countries forged diplomatic ties in 1974.

Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Reezal Merican Naina Merican said the Bahrain Ruler will begin his first visit to Malaysia from April 30 until May 3 since he ascended the throne on May 6, 1999.

"This is part of his series of visits to Southeast Asian nations and he is expected to depart for Brunei after his visit here," he said in a press conference on the visit held at Wisma Putra here today.

He said the visit which would include members of the royalty and ministers, was upon the invitation of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Muhammad V.

As part of the state visit, Raja Hamad will meet Sultan Muhammad V and be given a state welcome at Parliament House on May 1, and a State Banquet at Istana Negara.

Raja Hamad is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak at Seri Perdana, Putrajaya the next day (May 2) and in the evening, he and his entourage will be feted at an official dinner.

The King of Bahrain and Najib are scheduled to witness the signing of several memorandums of understanding (MoU), including agreements on air services and defence collaborations, he said.

Petronas is also scheduled to undertake an MoU with NOGA Holdings from Bahrain on cooperation on upstream and natural gas activities, he said.

Reezal Merican said the trade ties were in general at a moderate level, with bilateral trade value between Malaysia and Bahrain in 2016 worth RM861.5 million, making Bahrain the ninth biggest trade partner for Malaysia in West Asia.

"Malaysia also welcomes Bahrain in various joint-ventures like Islamic financing, education, tourism, and other areas where there is common interest," he said.

In conjunction with the visit, King Hamad will be conferred the Honorary Maroon Beret and the Honorary Paratrooper Wings from the 10th Para Brigade.

Reezal Merican said the government was confident Bahrain would be a close ally in the effort to combat extremism and terrorists including the Daesh threat.

"As such, both countries could consider forging ties and strengthening the sharing of surveillance information.

"Bahrain could also benefit from the existing expertise at the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter Terrorism to add to their skills in fighting the threat of terrorism, he said.

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