

Obama's 3-day visit extraordinary: Mahathir | My Sinchew

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KUALA LUMPUR, April 30 (Bernama) -- Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad regards the three-day official visit of the President of the United States (US), Barack Obama, to Malaysia which ended on Monday, as extraordinary.

He said, Obama's action of taking time to visit the National Mosque and Warriors' Mausoleum during his visit showed him as being very diplomatic and had winning ways.

"He (Obama) is very diplomatic and knows how to win over others. That is why he won (as US president)," he told reporters after launching a book, 'A UN Chronicle', written by renowned diplomat Tan Sri Razali Ismail with Sharifah Shifa al-Attas, at the Diplomatic and Foreign Relations Institute, here, today.

He said after President Lyndon B. Johnson visited Malaysia almost 50 years ago, no US president had visited this country.

"But Obama chose to visit. The visit could expose Obama to Malaysia. Maybe, Obama too, all this while, had heard a lot about Malaysia but did not know how the country was really like," he said.

Obama, the 44th US president, had a tight work schedule when in this country. On the first day of his arrival, he was given a red carpet welcoming reception at Parliament Square.

The leader of the world's superpower was feted at a state banquet with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah at Istana Negara on Saturday.

On the second day of his visit, Obama together with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak held a bilateral meeting at the Malaysian administrative centre in Putrajaya.

In addition, Obama also attended an informal meeting with youth leaders of Southeast Asia at Universiti Malaya, here.

On the last day of Obama's visit, he witnessed the signing of several commercial agreements between Malaysian and American companies worth US\$2 billion in the aviation, biotechnology and insurance sector.

The book, 'A UN Chronicle', which was launched by Dr Mahathir today contains the notes of Razali's experiences. He was president of the UN General Assembly from 1996 to 1997.

Razali in his speech, said he hoped the book could be a useful reference for Malaysian diplomats, would-be diplomats, academicians in international studies and students.

Among the experiences he recorded in the book was how he served the UN during the era of Dr Mahathir's leadership which was very proactive in fighting for the lot of developing countries, he added.