

|      |               |         |          |
|------|---------------|---------|----------|
| DATE | 15 / 8 / 2012 | SECTION | National |
| PAGE | 4             | COLUMN  | Nasional |

## Najib to clear haj quota issue with Saudi King

MECCA: Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, who is attending the OIC's Fourth Extraordinary Summit here, will clear the air over the haj quota issue with King Abdullah Abdul Aziz.

However, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom said no special audience had been arranged for the Prime Minister with the Saudi King.

He said as of now, the Saudi government had yet to announce any new haj quota for Malaysia.

"We have not heard any news or got any information. I think the PM will try (to speak to King Abdullah) during the summit," Jamil Khir, who is part of the accompanying official delegation, said yesterday.

Malaysia risks facing restrictions on the haj for the approaching pilgrimage season after groups of Malaysians took part in Bersih 3.0 assemblies here and in Medina in April.

The Saudi government is very sensitive towards any form of



Light moment: Najib (second from right) listening to Saudi ulama Sheikh Dr Abdullah Hamad Al Jalaly (right) during his meeting with ulamas at the OIC's Fourth Extraordinary Summit in Mecca.

unlawful assembly on its soil and is said to be contemplating such a restriction, or a suspension, against Malaysians performing the *haj* or *umrah*.

The haj quota is traditionally announced during Ramadan and with just days before the fasting month ends, Malaysians confirmed to perform the haj are waiting anxiously

whether they would be allowed to set foot on the Holy City of Mecca.

The existing quota for Malaysia is about 27,000, which is 1% of the total population of the country.