

Wednesday June 6, 2012

Obama's half-sister Maya Soetoro-Ng on six-day visit to Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR: Education specialist and half-sister of US [president Barack Obama](#), [Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng](#), is visiting Malaysia until June 11, as part of the East-West Centre delegation from the United States.

The four-member delegation comprised the Centre's [president Dr Charles Morrison](#), Board Member Puongpun Sananikone, and director for the education programme [Dr Terrence Bigalke](#).

A statement from the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia said Dr Soetoro-Ng is scheduled to call on [Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak](#), his wife [Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor](#) and [Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin](#).

She will also hold discussions on education and meet with students and academics from Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) college and PERMATApintar, among others.

While in Kuala Lumpur, she will launch a collection of 20 Indonesian batik pieces belonging to her late mother at the Islamic Arts Museum. Her visit is organised by the East-West Centre and hosted by ISIS Malaysia in cooperation with [Tun Daim Zainuddin](#)'s office and the embassy of the United States here.

Obama's half-sister calls on Muhyiddin

PUTRAJAYA: Dr Soetoro-Ng, an education specialist and a half-sister of United States President Barack Obama, today called on Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin at his office at the Education Ministry here.



Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin receives US President Barack Obama's half sister and education specialist Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng at his office in Education Ministry in Putrajaya. -- NST pix by Ahmad Irham Mohd Noor.

US Ambassador to Malaysia Datuk Paul W. Jones and former Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin were also present at the meeting.

Soetoro-Ng is on a six-day visit to Malaysia from Wednesday as a member of the East-West Centre delegation from the United States.

The others in the four-member delegation are the centre's president, Dr Charles Morrison, board member Puongpun Sananikone and director for the education programme, Dr Terrence Bigalke.

Soetoro-Ng is scheduled to hold discussions on education and meet with students and academics from Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) colleges and the PERMATApintar early childhood education programme, among others.

She is also scheduled to launch an exhibition of a collection of 20 Indonesian batik pieces belonging to her late mother, at the Islamic Arts Museum, from today, the first display of the collection outside the United States. -- BERNAMA

Saturday June 9, 2012

Breathtaking batik of Obama's mum

By REGINA LEE
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KUALA LUMPUR: They may not be worth much but some of the batik owned by the United States President's mother Ann Dunham are her most prized possessions.

And until July 20, these will be on display right here in Malaysia at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM) near Bukit Aman.

Her daughter, Maya Soetoro-Ng, half sister to [President Barack Obama](#), said she remembered how her late mother cherished her numerous batik sheets, lovingly collected during her travels and study around Indonesia as an anthropologist.



Prized possessions: Soetoro-Ng (left) and US ambassador to Malaysia Datuk Paul W. Jones (centre) being briefed by IAMM's head of curatorial affairs Dr Heba Nayel Barakat during the opening ceremony of 'Ann Dunham's Legacy – A collection of Indonesian batik' exhibition at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia Friday.

"None were worth very much, but she kept it close out of her love for South-East Asia and Indonesia," she said.

"She loved the batik dearly and would put them across the furniture," said Soetoro-Ng when launching "Ann Dunham's Legacy A collection of Indonesian batik" here yesterday.

Reminiscing on how her mother was so willing to understand people all over the world, Soetoro-Ng said the family never stayed put in a single country for long.

"She died before she had her own home, so there was no place that she could keep her batik where it could be taken care of," she said. "But this place looks like a lovely home," she said of the museum.

For the launch, Obama recorded a video message, saying that the batik collection was not just about fashion, but it was central to who his mother was as a person.

“As a woman, she knew the textiles meant a livelihood for the mothers and women who made them. In these fabrics, I'm reminded of the principles that animated my mother's life.

“She understood that whether you live in a rural village or a teeming city, we all share certain basic aspirations to live in dignity, peace and security; to provide for our families; to give our children a better life,” he said.

“I hope that this exhibit continues the work to which she devoted her life enlarging our discourse and our understanding, among peoples and among nations.”

Sunday June 10, 2012

Obama's little sister out to root for him again

By TAN EE LOO
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KUALA LUMPUR: Giving press interviews and calling voters from the volunteers' headquarters in Chicago were all part of the job for [Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng](#) when she campaigned for her brother in the 2008 US presidential election.

This year will be no different for [President Barack Obama](#)'s little sister as the education specialist will take the summer off to do the same.

"I will endeavour to share stories of his accomplishments with as many people as possible. I will resume my work at the University of Hawaii and East-West Centre in the fall," she said yesterday.

Dr Soetoro-Ng has often spoken fondly about her relationship with her older half-brother who she says has remained a strong figure in her life even though they have often lived far apart.

Describing him as her "big brother", Dr Soetoro-Ng was confident of his re-election prospects.

"He is an incredible man and politician because he takes a practical view of things. He understands it is very challenging to make everyone happy. He knows he has done his absolute best in moving forward."

Dr Soetoro-Ng and Obama have different fathers and the same mother Stanley Ann Dunham. Obama's father was Kenyan. Dr Soetoro-Ng married Chinese-Canadian Konrad Ng, who has Malaysian roots as his parents were born and raised in Malaysia before migrating to Canada.

Dr Soetoro-Ng, who is nine years younger than Obama, is an advocate for peace and multi-cultural education.

She said an individual could preserve his or her own cultural identity, and at the same time develop a new identity at regional and international levels.

Dr Soetoro-Ng will be in Malaysia until tomorrow as part of the US' East-West Centre delegation.

10 June 2012

Obama's sister Soetoro-Ng calls on Rosmah

PUTRAJAYA: Education specialist Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng, half-sister of U.S. President Barack Obama, today called on the prime minister's wife and Permata Negara early childhood education and care programme patron Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor at Seri Perdana, here.



Prime Minister's wife, who is also the patron of Permata, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor (L) receives a courtesy call by education specialist and half-sister of US President Barack Obama, Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng, at Seri Perdana in Putrajaya. NSTP/Fariz Iswadi Ismail.

At their meeting, Rosmah and Soetoro-Ng shared experiences and exchanged views on efforts to empower educational programmes, particularly those which emphasise integrated and structured child care and early childhood education.

Also present at the meeting were Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) vice-chancellor Prof Tan Sri Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan Shahabudin and Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia director-general Datuk Dr Mahani Zainal Abidin.

Soetoro-Ng is on a six-day visit to Malaysia from Wednesday as a member of the delegation from the East-West Centre of the United States. -- BERNAMA

'Malaysia prime example of multicultural learning'

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia can take the lead in multicultural education, even as it strives to create a strong national identity, says peace educator Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng.



Education specialist and half-sister of US President Barack Obama, Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng says multicultural education will help to increase one's sense of belonging to each other.

The half-sister of United States president Barack Obama, Soetoro-Ng said multicultural education was about learning to understand subjects, including identity, history and current events, from multiple points of view.

"Here in Malaysia, as well as in the US and Indonesia, people are thinking about identities and their connections -- politically, economically or globally.

"Encouraging this conversation around shared languages, arts and culture will help to foster empathy and increase one's sense of belonging to each other.

"It will also increase the possibilities for collaboration, whether in schools, universities, non-profit or governments," she said here yesterday.

Soetoro-Ng was on a six-day visit to Malaysia as a delegate of the East-West Centre (EWC), an education and research organisation based in Honolulu, Hawaii, working on strengthening US relations in the Asia-Pacific.

So far, her trip had included visits and discussions with students and academics from Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) colleges, the International Islamic University and the Permata Pintar early childhood education programme.

She said Malaysia, with its multi-ethnic, racial and religious makeup, had a lot to teach the region.

"One thing I really found delightful was the number of women represented in schools and universities. It's something that a lot of people and countries can take as an example (of a place) where women's voices are heard and their careers are supported.

"I was also impressed by the dialogue within the Islamic community, where there was an intellectual emphasis on using Islam not only to reach back to the past, but thinking forward to develop a role for strong civil Islam in regional and world events."

She said dialogue without violence was important as there would always exist conflict between ideas.

"You can transform conflict into productive understanding. Once we can openly talk about our own needs and identities as a group, that's the kind of empathy generated that is much more conducive to peace. "

This is Soetoro-Ng's first visit to the country. She was born and raised in Jakarta, Indonesia, where her brother, Obama, also spent his formative years.

Their late mother, Stanley Ann Dunham, an anthropologist who also worked at EWC and lived for many years in Jakarta, played a key role in shaping her approach as a peace educator, she said.

Monday June 11, 2012

Obama's sis meets Rosmah

PUTRAJAYA: Education specialist [Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng](#), the half-sister of US [President Barack Obama](#), has called on the Prime Minister's wife [Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor](#) at Seri Perdana here.

At their meeting yesterday, Rosmah and Soetoro-Ng shared experiences and exchanged views on efforts to empower educational programmes, particularly those that emphasised integrated and structured childcare and early childhood education.

Rosmah is the patron of the Permata Negara early childhood education and care programme.



Friendly discussion: Rosmah chatting with Soetoro-Ng in Putrajaya Sunday. —Bernama

Also present at the meeting were Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia vice-[chancellor Prof Tan Sri Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan Shahabudin](#) and Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia director-general [Datuk Dr Mahani Zainal Abidin](#).

Soetoro-Ng is on a six-day visit to Malaysia since Wednesday as a member of the delegation from the East-West Centre of the United States. — Bernama

2012/06/08

Adik perempuan tiri Obama kunjungi Muhyiddin

PUTRAJAYA: Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng, seorang pakar pendidikan dan adik perempuan tiri Presiden Amerika Syarikat Barack Obama, hari ini mengunjungi Timbalan Perdana Menteri dan Menteri Pelajaran, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin di pejabat beliau di Kementerian Pelajaran di sini.



Duta Amerika Syarikat ke Malaysia Datuk Paul W. Jones dan bekas Menteri Kewangan Tun Daim Zainuddin turut hadir pada pertemuan itu.

Soetoro-Ng kini dalam rangka lawatan enam hari ke Malaysia mulai Rabu sebagai sebahagian daripada delegasi East-West Centre dari Amerika Syarikat.

Anggota lain dalam delegasi empat anggota itu ialah Presiden pusat itu Dr Charles Morrison, anggota lembaganya Puongpun Sananikone dan pengarah program pendidikannya Dr Terrence Bigalke.

Soetoro-Ng, antara lain dijadual mengadakan perbincangan mengenai pendidikan dan bertemu pelajar dan ahli akademik dari kolej-kolej Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA) dan program pendidikan awal kanak-kanak PERMATA pintar.

Beliau juga dijadual melancarkan pameran koleksi 20 helai batik Indonesia milik mendiang ibunya di Muzium Kesenian Islam mulai hari ini, julung kalinya koleksi itu dipamerkan di luar Amerika Syarikat. - BERNAMA

2012/06/10

Rosmah terima kunjungan adik Obama, Dr Maya

PUTRAJAYA: Penaung Program Permata Negara dan isteri Perdana Menteri, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor menerima kunjungan Dr Maya Soetoro-Ng, seorang pakar pendidikan dan adik perempuan tiri Presiden Amerika Syarikat, Barack Obama di Seri Perdana di sini hari ini.



Hadir sama ialah Naib Canselor Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Prof Tan Sri Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan Shahabudin dan Ketua Pengarah Institut Kajian Strategik dan Antarabangsa (ISIS) Malaysia Datuk Dr Mahani Zainal Abidin.

Dalam pertemuan itu, Rosmah dan Soetoro-Ng berkongsi pengalaman dan bertukar pandangan mengenai usaha memperkasakan program pendidikan khususnya yang memberi penekanan terhadap kaedah pengasuhan dan pendidikan awal kanak-kanak secara bersepadu dan terancang.

Soetoro-Ng kini dalam rangka lawatan enam hari ke Malaysia mulai Rabu lepas sebagai sebahagian daripada delegasi East-West Centre dari Amerika Syarikat.

Beliau, antara lain dijadual mengadakan perbincangan mengenai pendidikan dan bertemu pelajar dan ahli akademik dari kolej-kolej Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) dan program pendidikan awal kanak-kanak PERMATApintar. - BERNAMA

10 Jun 2012

Batik manifestasi keprihatinan ibu Obama

KUALA LUMPUR 9 Jun - Setiap helai batik koleksi mendiang Ann Dunham, ibu kepada Presiden Amerika Syarikat (AS), Barack Obama merupakan manifestasi keprihatinan wanita berkenaan terhadap kehidupan masyarakat di rantau Asia Tenggara.

Anak perempuan Dunham dan adik tiri Obama, Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng berkata, ibunya mempunyai minat yang amat mendalam terhadap industri pembuatan batik sewaktu menetap di Indonesia.

Menurut beliau, walaupun sibuk dengan tugas sebagai ahli antropologi, Dunham sentiasa bersedia meluangkan masa- mendengar keluh-kesah pembuat batik yang sebahagian besarnya terdiri daripada golongan wanita.



KETUA Bahagian Kesenian Muzium Kesenian Islam Malaysia, Dr. Heba Nayel Barakat (kanan) memberi penerangan berkaitan batik kepada Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng (tengah) dan Paul W. Jones (kiri) di Muzium Kesenian Islam Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, semalam.

"Ibu saya berpandangan peranan pembuat batik amat penting dalam menyara kehidupan keluarga dan memberi sumbangan besar kepada masyarakat.

"Beliau berupaya menterjemah kisah-kisah yang ingin disampaikan oleh pembuat batik menerusi motif yang menghiasi setiap helaian batik dalam koleksinya," katanya pada sidang akhbar selepas merasmikan pameran Legasi Ann Dunham: Koleksi Batik Indonesia di Muzium Kesenian Islam Malaysia, di sini semalam.

Hadir sarna, Duta AS ke Malaysia, Datuk Paul W. Jones; Pengarah Muzium Kesenian Islam Malaysia, Syed Mohamad Albukhary dan suami Dr. Maya, Konrad Ng.

Pameran yang memaparkan sebanyak 20 helai kain batik Indonesia koleksi Dunham itu berlangsung mulai hari ini sehingga 20 Julai ini.

Sementara itu, Obama dalam rakaman video yang ditayangkan pada pameran tersebut menyatakan penghargaan atas inisiatif Muzium Kesenian Islam Malaysia menganjurkan pameran yang disifatkan sebagai sangat bermakna untuk beliau dan keluarga.

Menurut beliau, sebagai ahli antropologi, batik membantu ibunya memaharni sisi kehidupan masyarakat lain terutama dari sudut budaya, tradisi, cabaran serta harapan mereka.

"Sebagai perintis dalam pembiayaan mikro, beliau membantu penjual dan pembuat batik dalam bidang ekonomi," ujarnya.

11/06/2012

Dr. Maya kunjungi Rosmah



Rosmah Mansor beramah mesra dengan Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng yang mengunjungi beliau di Seri Perdana, semalam. – BERNAMA

PUTRAJAYA 10 Jun - Isteri Perdana Menteri, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor yang juga Penaung Permata Negara menerima kunjungan hormat pakar pendidikan Pusat Timur-Barat Amerika Syarikat (AS), Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng di Seri Perdana, hari ini.

Rosmah dan Soetoro-Ng yang juga adik tiri kepada Presiden AS, Barack Obama, turut mengadakan perbincangan pelbagai isu semasa, termasuk membabitkan pendidikan.

Soetoro-Ng adalah antara delegasi pusat berkenaan yang dalam rangka lawatan rasmi enam hari ke Malaysia bermula 6 Jun lalu dan dijangka berlepas pulang hari ini.

Lawatan beliau itu dianjurkan Pusat Timur-Barat dan Institut Kajian Strategik dan Antarabangsa (ISIS) dengan kerjasama pejabat Tun Daim Zainuddin serta Kedutaan AS.

Sebelum ini, Soetoro-Ng memuji usaha Malaysia melaksanakan pelbagai inisiatif membangunkan sistem pendidikan negara terutama melalui Program Permata Negara (Permata).

Beliau turut menyatakan, sistem pendidikan di Malaysia adalah antara terbaik di Asia Tenggara dan untuk itu, ia harus dikongsi dengan negara lain.