

MAHATHIR
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17. (c)
KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 29 (BERNAMA)-- MALAYSIA HAS MADE ISLAM ITS OFFICIAL RELIGION IN THE BELIEF THAT IT WOULD HELP TO ACHIEVE PHYSICAL WELL-BEING OF ITS PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STABILITY.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THAT AS SUCH, MALAYSIA HAD NOT NEGLECTED ISLAMIC POLICIES IN ITS DEVELOPMENT PLANS.

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THIS IN A MESSAGE CONTAINED IN THE CATALOGUE FOR THE MALAYSIAN BOOK EXHIBITION TO BE HELD IN MECCA, SAUDI ARABIA.

THE EXHIBITION WILL BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE EDUCATION OF MUSLIMS IN THE MODERN WORLD--CHALLENGES AND RESPONSE.

THE EIGHT-DAY CONFERENCE, ORGANISED BY THE KING ABDUL AZIZ UNIVERSITY, BEGINS ON THURSDAY.-- BERNAMA MORE 1232/1P

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MAHATHIR 2 KUALA LUMPUR

DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THOUGH MALAYSIA WAS A SMALL MUSLIM COUNTRY WITH LIMITED MEANS IN PUBLISHING BOOKS, IT DID NOT WISH TO BE LEFT OUT OF THE EXHIBITION.

HE SAID THAT MALAYSIA'S PARTICIPATION WAS ALSO TO SHOW FRIENDLY MUSLIM NATIONS OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN BOOK PUBLICATION.

IT WAS ALSO AIMED AT STRENGTHENING FRIENDLY TIES WITH THE NATIONS CONCERNED AND TO COOPERATE WITH THEM IN FIELDS THAT WOULD HELP TO FURTHER THE PROGRESS OF ISLAM AND ITS FOLLOWERS.

ON MALAYSIA'S RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA, DR. MAHATHIR SAID THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE VERY CLOSE IN RELIGIOUS AND OTHER FIELDS.

THE TWO COUNTRIES HAD COOPERATED CLOSELY ESPECIALLY IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROPAGATING OF ISLAM. 1)8

IN ANOTHER MESSAGE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MALAYSIAN BOOK AND EDUCATIONAL EQUIPMENT EXHIBITION COMMITTEE, DATUK ABDUL RAHMAN ARSHAD, SAID THAT THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT HAD MADE ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COMPULSORY FOR ALL MUSLIMS IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY.

ABOUT 1,000 TITLES, INCLUDING THOSE ON MUSLIM CUSTOMS, CULTURE, LAWS AND RELIGION, WRITTEN BY MALAYSIANS WILL BE ON SHOW. - BERNAMA 1235/1P.