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MAHATHIR - DIALOGUE
FROM RACHMAN NORDTN

PHILADELPHIA, OCT. 10 (BERNAMA) -- THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD AND MUSLIM SCHOLARS HERE ON MONDAY HAS HELPED TO CORRECT THE MISCO.

A TURKISH NATIONAL UNDERGOING A 10-YEAR DOCTORATE PROGRAMME AT THE UNIVERSITY DESCRIBED THE RATIONALE AND BASIS OF THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH IN THE MATTER AS +PARALLEL TO WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT.+

THE SCHOLARS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PRIOR TO MEETING DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION WAS THE WESTERN MEDIA OR THOSE CRITICAL OF MALAYSIA.

THE SCHOLARS FROM EGYPT, TANZANIA, NIGERIA, SUDAN, TURKEY, INDONESIA AND PAKISTAN SAID THEY HOPED TO DISSEMINATE THE PRIME MINISTER'S EXPLANATION TO OTHERS WHO DID NOT ATTEND THE DIALOGUE. --

SALMAN AL FARISI YUSOFF, 31, FROM NIGERIA SAID OF DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR: +I AM PROUD OF HIS KNOWLEDGE OF ISLAM.+

ENCIK SALMAN, WHO WAS THE FIRST TO POSE QUESTIONS, ASKED HOW MALAYSIA OVERCAME THE QUESTION OF MULTI-ETHNICITY IN IMPLEMENTING THE SYARIAH LAWS AND ENQUIRED WHETHER THE MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE COULD BE RELEVANT TO NIGERIA.

DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR TOLD HIM THAT MALAYSIA'S APPROACH WAS NOT TO RUSH INTO THINGS SO THAT CHAOS WOULD NOT BE THE END RESULT. HOWEVER, HE SAID MALAYSIA'S APPROACH MIGHT NOT BE APPLICABLE IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

MALAYSIANS AT ENDING THE DIALOGUE WERE EQUALLY SATISFIED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLIES.

ENCIK NASSERI TAIB, 42, OF JOHOR SAID DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR'S, EXPLANATION WAS SINCERE AND FRANK.

ENCIK NASSERI, WHO IS DOING A PH.D. IN ISLAMIC ECONOMY, SAID THE PRIME MINISTER'S RATIONALE AND COMPARISONS WERE CONVINCING,

BEKIRAKSOY, 31, OF TURKEY SAID HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR'S UNDERSTANDING OF ISLAM AND OF THE UMMAH'S CURRENT PROBLEMS.

HE DESCRIBED DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR AS A MUSLIM STATESMAN WHOM MALAYSIA SHOULD BE PROUD TO HAVE AS PRIME MINISTER.

IMTIYAZ YUSOF, 29, WHO IS ALSO DOING HIS MASTERS IN ISLAMIC STUDIES, SAID HE WAS IMPRESSED BY DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR'S PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS FACING THE UMMAH AND PRAISED THE PRIME MINISTER FOR HIS DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF ISLAM.

YUSNY SUBY, 40, OF INDONESIA DESCRIBED DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR AS A MUSLIM STATEMAN WHO KNOWS IN AND OUT OF WHAT HE IS TALKING. + HE SAID DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR, BEING THE DIPLOMAT HE IS, WAS NON-COMMITTAL WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF MUSLIMS IN INDONESIA.

HE ADDED THAT HE APPRECIATED THE PRIME MINISTER'S EXPLANATION THAT MALAYSIA WOULD NOT LIKE TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ITS NEIGHBOURS.

HE WAS DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY DATUK SERI DR. MAHATHIR'S SUBTLE AND REFINED COMPARISONS OF THE PROBLEMS IN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA.

YUSNY'S COMPATRIOT, MAHADI ABDUL KARIM, 38, WHO IS IN THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS MASTERS PROGRAMME AT THE TEMPLE UNIVERSITY, CONCURRED AND ADDED THAT HE HAD BENEFITED A LOT FROM THE DIALOGUE. -- BERNAMA.

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