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MAHATHIR-MUSLIMS

FROM SYED JAMIL JAAFAR '84 P

MALE (MALDIVES), NOV. 11 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS CALLED ON THE MUSLIM UMMAH TO ADOPT A NEW APPROACH TO FACE THE FUTURE AND MEET THE CHALLENGES OF AN EVER CHANGING SITUATION.

HE SAID THE MUSLIM UMMAH MUST HAVE +CLEARLY CRYSTALLISED IDEAS AND WELL ARTICULATED GOALS.+

+THE LAST FOUR CENTURIES HAS DONE US LITTLE CREDIT+, HE SAID AT THE OPENING OF THE GRAND FRIDAY MOSQUE AND ISLAMIC CENTRE BY PRESIDENT MAUMUN ABDUL GAYOOM HERE TODAY. THE CEREMONY WAS ATTENDED BY DIGNITARIES FROM 10 COUNTRIES.

+WE HAVE NOT REFLECTED THE ESSENCE OF ISLAM THAT WAS ONCE THE PACE SETTER OF PROGRESS AND UNITY,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

HE SAID THERE WAS A NEED TO UNDERSTAND ISLAM WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD AND EVER CHANGING CONDITIONS OF LIFE. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-MUSLIMS 2 MALE (MALDIVES)

+WE CANNOT RECREATE THE WORLD OF THE EARLY YEARS OF ISLAM. WE SHOULD THEREFORE REORGANISE OUR POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE TO SUIT THESE CHANGES IN A WAY THAT FULLY INCORPORATES THE INJUNCTIONS OF ISLAM,+ HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER REITERATED THE IMPORTANCE OF UNITY AMONG THE UMMAH AND SOLIDARITY BETWEEN ISLAMIC COUNTRIES IN PURSUING THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND MORAL WELL-BEING OF MUSLIMS THE WORLD OVER.

HE SAID THE GLORY AND SUPREMACY OF ISLAMIC VALUES RESTED ON THE FACT THAT THEY WERE NOT JUST TO PREPARE MUSLIMS FOR THE NEXT WORLD BUT ALSO TO GUIDE AND MOTIVATE THEM TOWARDS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING IN THIS' WORLD.

IN RECOGNISING THIS, THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT WAS INJECTING ISLAMIC VALUES IN ITS ADMINISTRATION.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS PROUD THAT MALAYSIANS HAD PARTICIPATED IN THE DESIGNING AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE MOSQUE AND ISLAMIC CENTRE.

HE SAID THE COMPLEX WAS NOT ONLY A LANDMARK FOR MALE BUT ALSO A LANDMARK IN ISLAMIC COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY.

THE MOSQUE AND CENTRE, COSTING MORE THAN \$10 MILLION, WAS DESIGNED BY 39-YEAR-OLD MALAYSIAN ARCHITECT HAJEEDAR ABDUL MAJID AND BUILT BY MALAYSIAN CONTRACTORS EMPLOYING MALAYSIAN WORKERS. THE ENGINEERS AND QUANTITY SURVEYORS WERE ALSO MALAYSIANS.

THE COMPLEX WAS FINANCED BY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ISLAMIC COUNTRIES WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND BRUNEI GIVING THE MAJOR PORTION.

MATERIALS FOR THE BUILDING WERE IMPORTED FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES -- CEMENT FROM THE PHILIPPINES, SAND AND STONES FROM SRI LANKA AND INDIA, MARBLE FROM GREECE AND WOOD FROM THAILAND. PAKISTAN DONATED THE ENTIRE CARPETING WHILE EGYPT PRESENTED THE INSCRIPTIONS OF QURANIC VERSES ADORNING THE WALLS.

THE MOSQUE AND CENTRE WAS OPENED BY THE PRESIDENT AS A SEVEN-GUN SALUTE BOOMED.

THE GATHERING THEN ADJOURNED FOR SOHOR PRAYERS IN THE MAIN CHAMBER, JOINING THOUSANDS OF MALDIVXANS WHO HAD BRAVED THE RAIN TO SEE THE OPENING OF WHAT IS NOW THEIR NATIONAL PRIDE. -- BERNAMA

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