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Mahathir-Sheikh

MAHATHIR, AL-AZHAR SHEIKH SHARE SAME OPINION ON IMPROVING ISLAMIC IMAGE

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 18 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Al-Azhar University Sheikh Dr Mohamed Sayed Tantawi both share the same opinion that moderation, knowledge mastery and sincere cooperation are among the aspects which need to be emphasised in efforts to improve the image of Islam.

Both were also of the opinion that attention should be given to the three aspects to enable Muslims to understand it.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the two came to this while exchanging views during a 45-minute meeting at the Prime Minister's Office, here.

"This is among the shared views of the Al-Azhar Sheikh and the Prime Minister," he said at a news conference after accompanying Dr Mohamed Sayed at the meeting.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Othman was also present.

Abdullah said the two also exchanged views on Islamic development and education as well as other approaches to improve the Islamic image.

Meanwhile, Dr Mohamed Sayed, who visited Malaysia when he was the Egyptian Mufti 10 years back, was impressed with the nation's rapid development.

"This is definitely through the efforts of the countrymen under the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who gave priority for the nation's and people's development," he said.

The Al-Azhar Sheikh is on a four-day visit here on Dr Mahathir's invitation.

He is scheduled to give a lecture at the Pusat Islam tomorrow apart from visiting the Kolej Agama Sultan Zainal Abidin in Terengganu, and Kedah.

Abdullah said Dr Mahathir and Dr Mohamed Sayed agreed for cooperation where Al-Azhar's expertise would be used by Malaysia to improve the Islamic image.

The Sheikh also informed Dr Mahathir of the accord agreed to several years ago that fixed the mode of admission for Malaysian students into the Al-Azhar University.

It includes the requirement where Malaysian students were required to sit for the same qualifying examinations with the other students and they were required to perform well in the examination.

Abdullah said so far some 20,000 Malaysians including Dr Abdul Hamid had pursued further studies in the university.

There are more than 5,000 Malaysians studying at the university.

-- BERNAMA

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