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Mahathir-Model

DR M IS A MODEL MUSLIM LEADER, RESPECTED BY ARABS

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 25 (Bernama) -- Editors of major Arab newspapers are of the view that Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is a role model for Muslim leaders.

They are amazed by the Prime Minister's vociferous speeches at international forums championing the cause of the third world including Arab and Islamic nations.

They are also amazed by Dr Mahathir's leadership which led to Malaysia's impressive economic growth and development and occupying the 17th position among trading nations in the world despite the country's small size.

More so, they look at Dr Mahathir as a leading Muslim thinker who can interpret the demands of Islam in a practical manner and used it as the key to Malaysia's success.

They expressed their observation and amazement personally at a meeting lasting almost two hours between Dr Mahathir and seven editors, including those from Egypt and Jordan, at his office here yesterday.

While they had been amazed by Malaysia's success, the editors had never been here before and their current visit to Malaysia is to get to know the country better.

Publisher of the Sudanese newspaper Al-Ray Al-Naam, Mahgoub Mohamed El-Hassan Erwa described Dr Mahathir as a statesman and a leading Muslim thinker and could be a role model for other Muslim leaders.

He said Malaysia must share with the Arab nations her secret in achieving economic success as well as her ability to maintain stability and harmony among the various races.

"The secret should be shared with the Arab nations which are continually being pitted against each other by the West such as the dispute between Sudan and Egypt," he said in Arabic and translated into Bahasa Malaysia by an interpreter.

Mahgoub said he would give much thought to each recommendation made by Dr Mahathir on Islamic economy in future.

The editor of Libyan newspaper Al Zahap Al Akhbar, Dr Abdul Kadir Ibrahim Al-Hadhiri is deeply attracted to Malaysia's five-year development plans which he described as key to the country's continued success.

"Muslim countries can learn much from Malaysia and emulate her approach and policies especially in eliminating poverty," he said.

Dr Mahathir modestly said that he had no intention of "teaching" any other country but expressed Malaysia's willingness to share her knowledge and experience.

The prime minister invited officials from Libya to come to Malaysia to gain more information on the five-year development plans.

Dr Mahathir also surprised the editor from Libya with his comments on the Green Book written by Libyan President Muammar Al-Qadaffi.

He said the views contained in the book were quite similar to Malaysia's views on how Third World nations should move.

Earlier, the editor said besides Qadaffi, he had admired Dr Mahathir as a world leader all along.

Senior Economic writer for The News of Pakistan, Kiani Khaleeq Ahmad Khan said he was attracted to Dr Mahathir's idea on the way out of the economic crisis which was successfully implemented by Malaysia.

He hoped Dr Mahathir could also give his views continually to the

Muslim countries as well as offer advice that could help them resolve their economic problems.

He was impressed with Dr Mahathir's views on Pakistan, which the prime minister had described as a very rich Muslim country which had the potential to emerge as a very strong Muslim nation if she could overcome her internal problems.

Dr Mahathir felt that the economic sanction imposed on Pakistan was unfair as there was no economic and trade embargo on Israel which had nuclear weapons too.

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