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Election-University

DR MAHATHIR FOUNDED ISLAMIC VARSITY NOT ANWAR- FORMER DEPUTY RECTOR

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 26 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's International Islamic University (IIU) was founded by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and not by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, its former Deputy Rector Professor Datuk Dr Ariffin Suhaimi said today.

Hence it is hoped no group would try to distort the history of the founding of the IIU to advance its political interests, he said in a statement.

"The IIU is the brainchild of Dr Mahathir as he is the one who proposed its founding when visiting the United Arab Emirates in January 1982," Dr Ariffin aid.

"I have to explain this because there are groups which are distorting history by claiming that the IIU was set up through the efforts of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim," he said.

Dr Ariffin said details of the setting up of the university were worked out by the Education Ministry which was then headed by Minister Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Haji Daud.

"I was appointed the project coordinator for the setting of the university in April 1982 and this work I carried out under the directives of Dr Sulaiman," he said.

The IIU was officially set up on May 20, 1983 and its first Rector was Muhammad M. Abdul Rauf.

Anwar came to be involved only when he was appointed IIU President in 1988 to succeed the late Tun Hussein Onn, he said.

On being appointed IIU President, Anwar appointed his friend Dr Abdul Hamid AbuSulayman, a Saudi Arabian national, who lived in Washington, USA, as IIU Rector, he said.

"Under the administration of this Rector (Dr AbdulHamid), the implementation of the Islamic Education concept became indistinct and was set aside," he said.

The education concept pursued by Dr AbdulHamid was "Intellectualization of Islam" a concept which ran counter to the original philosophy of setting up the university, Dr Ariffin said.

"To my mind, the concept of "Intellectualization of Islam" represents "Westernization of Islam".

If any person was responsible for diverting the original IIU philosophy that person is none other than Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim aided and abetted by his friend Dr AbdulHamid, Dr Ariffin said.

He expressed the hope that the new IIU administration would strive to restore the IIU back to the founding philosophy of Dr Mahathir.

Dr AbdulHamid who resigned this year has been succeeded by a Malaysian -- Professor Dr Mohamed Kamal Hassan. Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak is now the IIU President.

--BERNAMA

NY AAM