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Mahathir-OIC

MALAYSIA WANTS OIC COUNTRIES TO BE UNITED

KUALA LUMPUR, June 26 (Bernama) -- Malaysia hopes member nations of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) will strengthen their unity and continue to have respect for each other, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said Malaysia did not want to see allegations surfacing that one country was less Islamic or more Islamic than the other to the extent of causing one country to resort to political actions.

"Some countries despite being members of the same organisation had acted against others which in their view was not good enough, perhaps less Islamic than they themselves," he said when responding to reporters questions at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport, Subang, on his return from the G15 summit in Egypt. Dr Mahathir was asked what his hopes were for the 27th session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers beginning here tomorrow.

Dr Mahathir said unity among Muslim countries was still not strong even though they regarded themselves as Muslim brothers.

"Unity is wanting... too wanting. We are good in saying that we are all Muslim brothers but only pay lip service. Even in our own country we do not practise what we preach."

Asked about Malaysia's stand on the OIC Secretary-General's post, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia did not favour any particular country.

He said Malaysia purely held to the principle of Muslim brotherhood and wanted Islamic countries to speak with one voice at least on achieving certain objectives.

Asked whether the OIC Secretariat need to be restructured with a view to bringing about greater unity, the Prime Minister said, "That we do not know but we have to consider. Even after restructuring if the same attitude prevails, it will be of no use also."

On Malaysia's motion calling for the restructuring of the international financial architecture to be moved at the ICFM meeting, Dr Mahathir said OIC member countries should also have a say as many of its members also faced economic pressure.

"Many OIC countries are being pressured over finance, with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) controlling their finances such as in Egypt where similar attempts have been made so that it would open up to foreign banks."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia and other Islamic countries faced the same problems from the schemings of certain groups within powerful countries out to dominate their economy.

Asked about the request from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) from the Southern Philippines for observer status in the OIC, he said, "That we have to ask our fellow OIC members."

-- BERNAMA

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