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IIUM-Rector

IIUM A MODEL FOR OTHERS, SAYS FORMER RECTOR

By: R.Ravichandran

KUALA LUMPUR, April 16 (Bernama) -- The International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) has become a model for many other universities in the world, its first Rector Tan Sri Professor Muhammad Abdul Rauf said today.

He said the university was not only seen as a centre of excellence in the educational field but also for other aspects of human values like morality based on Islamic teachings.

Prof Muhammad said IIUM was increasingly viewed as a model in many parts of Africa, which has a large number of Muslim countries.

"It is a modern and a very young university, but has obliged itself with strong moral values based on Islam," he said in an interview.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will officially open the IIUM main campus in Gombak tomorrow. The university, which was set up in 1983, previously operated from its campus in Petaling Jaya which now serves as its matriculation centre.

Prof Muhammad said IIUM now provided education in almost all fields, a far cry from its early days when it had only three faculties -- Economic, Law and Centre of Fundamental Knowledge.

"Today it is a full-fledged and successful university, having the ability of a great institution of higher learning. It has got world recognition and is highly respected," he said.

Prof Muhammad said thousands of IIUM graduates, mostly from developing countries, had returned to work in their countries and were contributing to the countries' well-being and nation building.

"IIUM understands its mission and tries to fulfil it... it will continue to do so, I believe," he said.

To maintain its education quality and international status, IIUM should continue to develop human knowledge among its staff, especially in the area of research and development, said Prof Muhammad.

"It has to produce more books, articles and journals of world standard," said the 83-year-old Egyptian-born who was UIA rector between 1983 and 1988.

On the challenges facing IIUM in the globalised world, Prof Muhammad said the university must continue to contribute in many areas of education.

"IIUM must keep up the university's standard," he said.

Praising Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir for his far-sightedness in mooting the setting up of the university, he said many countries were benefiting from his vision.

"Dr Mahathir had the vision and intention to serve the country and the Islamic world.

"My contribution was only in leading my brothers, men and women to promote the religion, education and human values," said Prof Muhammad, who was one of the persons instrumental in setting up the economic and law faculties.

The author of about 80 books, the professor continues to write books. His latest book is "The Muslim Mind - History of the Muslim Intellectual Life (1300-1768 AD).

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