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MALAYSIA-CAUCUS

CONGRESSMAN PRAISES MSIA FOR FOLLOWING OWN PRESCRIPTION FOR DEVELOPMENT

By: Salmly Hashim

WASHINGTON, May 15 (Bernama) -- An American Congressman has commended Malaysia for achieving positive results despite pursuing its own prescriptions for development and amid criticisms by global agencies, saying it spoke well of the country's ability to manage its economy.

Democrat Gregory W. Meeks from New York, said Malaysia is of interest to him because for 30 years, it has followed its own approach to economic development.

And "they didn't follow the World Bank's or the IMF's (International Monetary Fund) approach and the results speak for themselves," he said.

Meek, the co-chair of the Malaysia-America Friendship Caucus, said this after the launch of the caucus also known as the Malaysia, Trade, Security and Economic Cooperation Caucus, by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad Tuesday night.

He said that the US and Malaysia have strong economic and defence ties, and are partners in combating terrorism. "In spite of being left out in the movie Black Hawk Down, Malaysia also shed blood with us in Somalia."

Meeks said that the prime minister had stood virtually alone in the Islamic world on the principle that any armed attack against civilians, by individuals, groups or states, regardless of justification should be globally defined as terrorism.

"And we should be clear that Malaysia does not come to us seeking a handout. "Malaysia seeks a real partnership with America as part of Malaysia's own goal of becoming a developed nation by the year 2020 and the prime minister's vision for the Asean region to assume its rightful place and responsibilities as contributors to the world economy," said Meeks.

Meanwhile, Co-chair of the Caucus, Congressman Pete Sessions (Republican-Texas) said the caucus would assist in educating and informing other members of congress and US government officials about the benefits of a cooperative, anti-terrorist, pro-democracy and pro-free trading relationship with Malaysia. -- BERNAMA

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