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Mahathir-OIC

DR MAHATHIR RECORDS APPRECIATION FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN OIC

PUTRAJAYA, Oct 18 (Bernama) -- Describing the Summit Meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) which ended yesterday as one which was full of anxiety and placed much "pressure", Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight recorded his appreciation to all those involved in the smooth organisation of the conference.

The Prime Minister said organising the 10-day OIC conference was a heavy and difficult task and needed good coordination and mobilisation of manpower to make it a success.

"I have organised many international conferences and meetings but the OIC Summit this time was the one which was most worrying," he said in his speech at the appreciation dinner for all staff involved in the OIC Summit at the Putrajaya Convention Centre (PCC).

Malaysia had in the past hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 1989, the 16th Commonwealth Games in 1998 and the most recent, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Conference in February.

The OIC Summit Meeting from Oct 11 to 18 started with the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) and concluded with the meeting of the Heads of State and Government on Thursday and yesterday.

The Summit meeting held at the PCC saw the biggest participation by Muslim leaders since the Sept 11, 2001 attack in the United States (US).

Dr Mahathir also revealed that he took two months in advance to prepare his speech for the conference and became more and more anxious as the meeting drew closer while the speech had yet to be prepared.

"What I said could cause anger to the delegates or head of state because there were Kings, Presidents and Prime Ministers who attended who were very sensitive...so if I had said something out of place, anything could happen.

"I thought I had criticised Islamic nations, but there were others who reacted to the extent that the Malaysian High Commissioner in London was summoned (by the British government) to give clarification," he said.

Yesterday, Malaysian High Commissioner Datuk Abdul Aziz Mohammed was summoned to meet with British Minister of State, Mike O'Brien who expressed his government's concern over Dr Mahathir's speech at the opening ceremony of the OIC meeting with regard to the Jews ruling the world by proxy on Thursday.

Expressing his gratitude, Dr Mahathir said all preparation and work in organising the OIC had gone well and, in fact, the country had received praise for the success of the meeting from most leaders and delegates who attended.

"They were impressed with the courteousness of the officers who performed their tasks well...everything went smoothly because of the contribution of every personnel who carried out their work very well," he said.

Describing the organisation of the conference as a national service, the Prime Minister said everyone had contributed to the country because they wanted Malaysia to be known as a courteous nation and they had performed their task properly.

He said among factors that led to the success of the conference was the care taken by the staff in noting down all the work that needed to be done.

Dr Mahathir also advised that all notes recorded in handling such conferences should be stored so that they could be used as a guide in

future.

Dr Mahahtir, who retires at the end of the month, also thanked government officers who had given him all the support and cooperation throughout his 22-year tenure as Prime Minister.

"Without the support and cooperation in implementing government directives and carrying out our tasks, the country cannot achieve development," he said.

Malaysia, which is now regarded as the most developed among developing countries, had become a model for the other developing nations, he said.

Dr Mahathir said all these were made possible through the cooperation of everyone and he was confident that the cooperation between government officers and other parties would continue when Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi succeeded him as Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister also openly thanked his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali for her guidance and encouragement.

-- BERNAMA

HS HM AO