

28 JAN 2003

Mahathir-Hany

PRESIDENT OF ISLAMIC RELIEF CALLS ON DR MAHATHIR

PUTRAJAYA, Jan 28 (Bernama) -- The President of Islamic Relief, Dr Hany El-Banna, who is on a four-day visit to Malaysia from Sunday, called on the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at his office here today.

During the hour-long meeting, Dr Hany and Dr Mahathir discussed a wide range of issues relating to Malaysia's development and infrastructure.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Dr Hany said he was highly impressed with the progress Malaysia had made under Dr Mahathir during his 21 years of service as the Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir had successfully transformed Malaysia from an agriculture-based economy into a highly industrialised country, he said.

They also discussed matters pertaining to Islam such as improving its image and that of its followers, dialogue between Muslims and people of other religions and how they could work together to make the world a better place.

Meanwhile Dr Hany's personal assistant Khalid Almulad said Islamic Relief had opened an office in Iraq.

Khalid, who has been to Baghdad twice in the last three months, said some 1,200 schools in Baghdad needed rehabilitation and the school dropout rate was high as most of the schools were not able to operate efficiently.

He also said Baghdad was in need of a leukaemia centre in view of the high rate of blood cancer in the last decade.

Islamic Relief is a non-governmental organisation which has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and is a signatory to the code and conduct of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and NGOs in providing disaster relief.

After his Malaysia visit, Dr Hany leaves for Britain tomorrow.

-- BERNAMA

MFZ KHY AAM