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OIC-boy

10-YEAR-OLD TO RECITE QURANIC VERSES AT OIC FMM OPENING

By: Rosyatimah Tukimin

PUTRAJAYA, Oct 12 (Bernama) -- Despite the heavy responsibility ahead of him, 10 year-old Mohd Anas Haji Razali is on cloud nine. He has been chosen to recite the holy verses at the opening of the OIC Foreign Ministers meeting tomorrow.

Anas is overjoyed to be part of the important event at the Putrajaya Convention Centre (PCC).

"I am very happy to be invited to recite the Quran before the international audience and I hope to do my best," said the Year Four pupil of Sekolah Kebangsaan 1 Tapah, Perak.

"I was shown around the PCC yesterday and feel very proud and fortunate to be among the first to be visiting this great building," he said in an interview with Bernama at the hotel he is staying here.

An official at the OIC Secretariat said the idea to have a young "qari" (Quran reader) to recite the Quran at one of the opening ceremonies of the summit was mooted by Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar while the selection was made by the Malaysian Islamic Advancement Department (Jakim).

Anas, who is this year's national champion of the school-level "Tilawah" (Quran Recital Competition), was the obvious choice and his age coincided with the summit being held for the 10th time.

The official said having a young "qari" would suitably portray the OIC pursuit of promoting knowledge among its 57 members.

This was also in line with the 10th Summit's theme "Knowledge and Morality for the Progress of the Ummah".

Having been taught to read the Quran since the age of five by his father, Haji Razali Hasan, 45, Anas had won several Quran reading competitions.

The fifth of 13 siblings, his other Quran recitals included the one at an international conference of Muslim youths in Kuala Lumpur last month as well as at an international Muslim women's gathering in Bangi.

As Anas looks forward to tomorrow's occasion, his father is closely monitoring his diet.

"He will have no ice-water for drinking, no spicy and oily food for the few days while we are here to ensure flawless presentation, hopefully," said Razali, a Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) employee in Teluk Intan, Perak.

The summit kicked off yesterday with the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) which approved the agenda for the two-day FMM meeting.

The OIC heads of state and government will meet on Thursday and Friday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

-- BERNAMA

RT AZZ AAM