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Seminar on PM's contributions to Islam

THE Zayed Centre for Coordination and Follow-up (ZCCF) in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, will sponsor a one-day seminar on The Contributions of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to the Arab World and Islam in May.

Malaysian Ambassador to the UAE, Datuk Syed Hussein Al Habshee, said the seminar would be jointly sponsored by the embassy and would cover several aspects of Dr Mahathir's administration.

"The seminar aims to inform the Arab world how Dr Mahathir had developed Malaysia and the style of his administration over the past 21 years as Prime Minister," Syed Hussein said.

The ZCCF operates under the umbrella of the Arab League and is presided by UAE Deputy Prime Minister, Sheikh Sultan Zayed Al Nahyan.

"The Prime Minister is well-known and respected in the Arab world, but there is no material on him in Arabic. That is why this seminar is important," Syed Hussein said.

He added that Dr Mahathir's popularity in the Arab world had made it easier for Malaysian businessmen here.

The seminar will be held on May 15 and is expected to be attended by about 100 people comprising diplomats, senior Arab Government officials, businessmen and the media.

Former Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid, who is also International Islamic University president, and Universiti Sains Malaysia Deputy Vice-Chancellor Prof Datuk Syed Ahmad Hussein would present working papers at the seminar.

Two UAE academicians are also expected to present their working papers.

What is presented, discussed and learnt at the seminar will then be compiled into a book in both the Arab and English languages to be distributed throughout the Arab world.

Emirates News Agency editor, Jamal Al Majaida, said the seminar would highlight the importance of the good relations between Malaysia and the UAE.

"The Prime Minister is respected in Arab nations because of his views, especially on the United States when it was proposing the war on Iraq.

"As the chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, even though he is in Malaysia, Dr Mahathir and the movement are fighting to end the war, insisting that it is illegal and immoral.

"He is also playing an important part in the fight for the rights of the Palestinians," he said.