

Sheikh Al-Azhar's visit to Malaysia a great honour, says Anwar



PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has described the special visit of the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Al-Sharif (Sheikh Al-Azhar), Prof Dr Ahmad Muhammad Ahmad At-Tayyeb, to Malaysia as a great honour, recognising the visit from a highly respected and revered figure in the Islamic world.

He said Sheikh Al-Azhar, currently on a four-day special visit to Malaysia until this Friday (July 5), was renowned as a leading scholar who had made significant contributions to the Islamic world for centuries.

"On behalf of my colleagues, especially from the Malaysian Government, I am deeply moved by the fact that when I extended my invitation to the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, he immediately accepted and arranged for this meeting tonight," he said in his welcoming speech at the Majlis Ilmu Madani: "Distinguished Speaker Series" here on Wednesday (July 3). More than 400 guests attended it.

Also present were the Prime Minister's wife Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, and director-general of the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, Datuk Hakimah Mohd Yusoff.

Anwar noted that besides having a strong stance on the Palestinian issue, Sheikh Al-Azhar was also very knowledgeable about current issues.

"He wants Muslims to lead in matters of digital technology, Artificial Intelligence and energy transition, and he urges Muslims not to fall behind in exploring new fields of thought and technology.

"For this reason, he will also be directly involved in the World Future's Summit in New York. This, to me, represents a significant role in strengthening Islam, adhering to Islamic faith and morality while continuing to progress and advocate for change in fields that Muslims need to explore.

"Therefore, I believe his presence will be beneficial, as he emphasises the importance of enhancing the understanding of Islam," he said.

The special visit by Sheikh Al-Azhar, who holds the status of Prime Minister according to the Egyptian Constitution, marks a historic moment in bilateral relations between Malaysia and the Arab Republic of Egypt and demonstrates the strong ties and close cooperation between the two countries in efforts to develop a progressive and dynamic Muslim community.

Meanwhile, in his lecture "The Role of Morality and Tolerance in Building a Madani Nation", Sheikh Al-Azhar urged Malaysians to maintain harmony in the multiracial community.

"I also remind those present to take guidance from the Prophet Muhammad in terms of interactions among Muslims and between Muslims and non-Muslims," he said, speaking in Arabic, which was translated into Bahasa Melayu. – Bernama

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