
MALAYSIA TO HOST MAJOR SUMMIT OF MUSLIM LEADERS

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18.12.2019

Yahoo News (17 December 2019)

Malaysia will this week host a summit of Muslim leaders billed as a forum to look at the Islamic world's problems, but it will be closely watched for Middle East power plays and their stance on China's Uighur minority.

Leaders from Iran, Turkey, and Qatar will be among hundreds of delegates attending the three-day event set to discuss myriad challenges faced by Muslims.

The summit has been pushed by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, who has long championed greater solidarity among the world's Islamic communities -- and wants to boost his country's standing on the international stage.

A key question is whether China's treatment of its mostly Muslim Uighur minority, many of whom have been sent to "re-education" camps, will be raised after Islamic leaders faced criticism for largely remaining silent on the issue.

In a statement ahead of the forum, Mahathir's office said the Muslim community was suffering due to "the incarceration of millions (who) are placed in detention camps, civil wars resulting in total destruction of cities... the rise of Islamophobia".

With no high-level Saudi delegation coming but the President of arch-rival Iran and the emir of Qatar -- under a Riyadh-led blockade -- in attendance, there has been speculation the forum could be used to counter the kingdom's influence.

Also present is Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose ties with Riyadh have worsened in recent times.

Saudi Arabia's King Salman was invited but is not coming, Malaysian officials say.

The meeting comes against the backdrop of high tensions between the kingdom and Iran, the Middle East's leading Sunni and Shiite powers, after assaults on oil tankers and installations in the Gulf.

Read more at: <https://news.yahoo.com/malaysia-host-major-summit-muslim-leaders-110600726.html>

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