

SPEECH AT THE LAUNCHING OF THE BOOK: "LAWS OF INDIA ON RELIGION AND  
RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS"

By  
PROFESSOR DR. TAHIR MAHMOOD

At  
ASHOKA HOTEL, NEW DELHI, INDIA

On  
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By  
Dato'Abdul Hamid Mohamad  
Chief Justice of Malaysia

This visit to New Delhi is a memorable one to me. This is the first time that I leave the shore of Malaysia since my appointment as President of the Court of Appeal Malaysia in September 2007 and my appointment as the Chief Justice of Malaysia two months later. When I received the invitation by Professor Dr. Tahir Mahmood to attend this conference, I was only a Judge of the Federal Court (over here you call it the Supreme Court). From the time I received the invitation until I arrive here, I have had three promotions, thanks to the invitation, I think. To make it is even more memorable, my learned friend Professor Dr. Tahir Mahmood had slotted me to deliver the keynote address a short while ago. As if that is not enough he now gives me this great honor to launch his book. In fact when I received his "request" through the email, I asked him "Do I really deserve this honour?"

Ladies and gentlemen,

We, the legal fraternity, are lucky that Professor Dr. Tahir Mahmood, as busy as he is, is able to produce another momentous book on religion and religious affairs. This is yet another contribution by him in the area that he loves: law.

Professor Dr. Tahir Mahmood is currently a Jurist-Member of the Law Commission of India. He was Dean of the Delhi University Law Faculty, Chairman of the National Minorities Commission, an Expert-Member of the Ranganath Misra Commission on Minorities. He has authored a larger number of books many of which have been cited in the judgments of the Supreme Court and the various High Courts in India. He is an Advisor to BYU School of Law and Religion in the United States and a Founder-Promoter of the International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies based in Italy.

When Malaysia was in the process of establishing the International Islamic University of Malaysia, we tried to entice him to Malaysia. We failed. But, with his help, we managed to get eleven of his students to join the teaching staff of the university, some of them are now professors. This is where 11=1.

So, even before reading it, I knew what to expect from his book. Since my arrival yesterday, I managed to browse through the book. I know that I am not doing justice to

the book by merely browsing though it very quickly. But, from experience, you know a gem when you see it. It is a gem and I concur with every word said about the book in the brochure.

Echoing the words of Mr. Justice V. R. Iyer, as Malaysian Judges often do back home, with some modifications, I certainly recommend this book to every Malaysian lawyer, judge, jurist and student. This book will be a useful reference book to them. As you well know, the Malaysian Constitution, besides our Criminal Procedure Code, Penal Code, Contracts Act and many others are modeled after their Indian counterparts. Hence, judgments of the Courts in India and opinions of Indian authors are widely cited in Malaysia by Judges and lawyers alike. Our only complaints are that they are too long and the prints are too small. But, that does not apply to this book.

It is with great pleasure that I now launch the book “Laws of India on Religion and Religious Affairs” by Professor Dr.Tahir Mahmood and wish it a great success.