

Teheran hails KL stand on Gulf war

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13 FEB 1981

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. — Iran has welcomed Malaysia's neutrality on the Gulf war and invited the Prime Minister and other Malaysian leaders to visit the country to "see for themselves the situation there."

This was stated here today by the Iranian Premier, Mohammad Ali Rajai's special envoy, Dr Mohammad Taghi Banki, leading a four-member delegation on a six-day visit to this country to explain Iran's stand on the conflict with Iraq.

Addressing a Press conference, he noted that

in his talks with Malaysian leaders, including Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the question of Malaysia not having enough information about the conflict was brought up.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir had said Malaysia's job was to listen, but maintain strict neutrality in order to be acceptable to both sides.

Asked if he was disappointed with Malaysia's stand, Dr Mohammad said "no" because "my feeling is that Malaysia wants to play a role in ending the conflict" but was handicapped by lack of facts."

"I am here on behalf of my Prime Minister to say to Malaysian leaders: Please come to Iran and make your investigation, gather facts and get the true picture of the whole problem," he said.

Asked about Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir's response to the invitation, the special envoy said the Acting Prime Minister told him he would consider it.

He said Iran welcomed Malaysia's stand "in the sense that Malaysia has shown interest backed with sincerity in wanting to get the facts of the problem."

In any conflict, one side was wrong and the

other right, he added, and remarked: How could one be fair and pass an equitable judgment without the facts?

On the Islamic summit initiative, to send a peace mission to Teheran, Dr Mohammad said Iran welcomed the mission, but only to gather information.

Dr Mohammad preferred to call the mission an information mission and not a peace mission.

Islamic tenets

He made it clear Iran would accept peace with integrity only in accordance with Islamic tenets and would reject any peace initiative that condoned aggression.

"Our position is that while aggression exists we are going to resist, even if the war goes on for 100 years," he declared.

Iran, he said, would accept the term "cease-fire" only if Iraq withdrew its troops and "when they do that, we will not push them out or fire a bullet on their backs because we believe in Islam."

"When Iraqi troops leave Iran, then a good

mission of friendly countries can look into the situation and find some solution based on Islamic and international laws.

"The aggressor, who has caused so much damage, should be severely punished," he said, showing reporters' photographs of the damage caused by Iraqi firepower on Iranian towns and population.

Dr Mohammad said Iraq, afraid of the Iranian Islamic revolution, attacked Iran on Sept. 21, 1980, disregarding the 1975 accord between the two countries recognising the "Tahveg Line" on the Shatt-al-Arab waterways.

Asked why Iran did not attend the Taif Islamic summit, Dr Mohammad said Iran had reasons to believe that there were non-Muslim elements in the conference and this constituted an insult.