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MAHATHIR-PEACE

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KUALA LUMPUR, SEPT 29 (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA IS OPPOSED TO ANY ESCALATION OF THE IRAQ-IRAN CONFLICT REGARDLESS WHICH SIDE STEPS UP THE WAR, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS COMMENTING ON REPORTS ON IRAQ'S CONTINUED ATTACKS ON IRANIAN OIL EXPORT INSTALLATIONS AND IRAN'S WARNING TO BLOCKADE VITAL IMPORTS OF ALL ARAB STATES IN THE GULF IF THE ATTACKS CONTINUE.

MALAYSIA IS A MEMBER OF THE ISLAMIC PEACE COMMITTEE WHICH MET IN JEDDAH RECENTLY TO RENEW EFFORTS TO BRING THE WARRING COUNTRIES TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING SAID THE IPC HAD MAPPED OUT CERTAIN STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO RESOLVE THE SIX-YEAR-OLD CONFLICT.

HOWEVER, HE DID NOT ELABORATE, SAYING ONLY THAT IPC CHAIRMAN SIR DAWDA JAWARA +KNOWS WHAT IS TO BE DONE TO DE-ESCALATE THE WAR.+

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2010MST 29 09 85

MAHATHIR PEACE : KUALA LUMPUR

ASKED WHETHER THE IPC WOULD FALL BACK ON THE ISLAMIC PRINCIPLE THAT AN INTRANSIGENT STATE IN A PEACE NEGOTIATION SHOULD BE PENALISED, HE SAID THAT AT THE MOMENT, THE COMMITTEE WAS STILL TRYING TO +PERSUADE+ BOTH SIDES TO END THE CRISIS. -- BERNAMA
2014MST 29 09 85