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MAHATHIR-REFUGEES
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KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 12⁹⁰ (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY REMINDED THIRD COUNTRIES TO HONOUR THEIR PLEDGE AND NOT TO BE SELECTIVE IN RESETTLING ALL VIETNAMESE REFUGEES NOW GIVEN TEMPORARY SHELTER IN MALAYSIA.

CERTAIN THIRD COUNTRIES ONLY PICKED +PREFERRED+ REFUGEES AND LEFT THE +REJECTS+ IN MALAYSIA, HE TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE AFTER CHAIRING A MEETING OF LEADERS OF BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTIES AT UMNO HEADQUARTERS HERE.

HE SAID IT WAS IMPROPER FOR THIRD COUNTRIES TO BE CHOOSY ABOUT VIETNAM REFUGEES AS THEY HAD AGREED THAT MALAYSIA IS ONLY A TRANSIT COUNTRY.

THE PRIME MINISTER DENIED REPORTS THAT MALAYSIA HAD ALLEGEDLY TOWED AWAY VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

HE SAID THOSE MAKING SUCH ALLEGATIONS COULD SEE FOR THEMSELVES THE SITUATION AND THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE POPULATION ON PULAU BIDONG.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE HAD NOT RECEIVED ANY COMPLAINTS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) ON THE ALLEGATIONS.-- BERNAMA

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