

MAHATHIR-TORNADOES R'R'R'R'  
BM

KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 25<sup>90</sup> (BERNAMA) -- MALAYSIA MAY OPT FOR CHEAPER JET FIGHTERS IF THE DEAL TO PROCURE BRITISH-MADE TORNADOES IS OFF, SAID PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD.

THE GOVERNMENT WAS REVIEWING PLANS TO BUY THE TORNADOES BECAUSE OF THEY ARE TOO EXPENSIVE AND SOPHISTICATED, HE SAID.

HOWEVER THERE WAS NO DECISION YET ON THE MATTER, HE SAID.

THE GOVERNMENT WAS THINKING WHETHER THE COUNTRY REALLY NEEDED THE TORNADOES, HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER REVIEWING A FULL-DRESS REHEARSAL FOR THE OPENING OF THE G-15 SUMMIT CONFERENCE AT THE BANQUET HALL AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE TODAY.

HE SAID IF THE GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO GET CHEAPER AND LESS SOPHISTICATED AIRCRAFT, THE JET FIGHTERS WOULD STILL BE OF BRITISH ORIGIN BY VIRTUE OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WHICH BOTH COUNTRIES SIGNED TWO YEARS AGO.

+AS THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WAS SIGNED WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WE SHOULD SWITCH TO ANOTHER AIRCRAFT TYPE, ALSO FROM BRITAIN,+ HE SAID.-- MORE  
1734MST 25 05 90

D366

U EB44 AAE  
MAHATHIR-TORNADOES 2 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'R'

ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT'S OTHER CHOICE COULD BE THE FIGHTER/TRAINER +HAWK+ AIRCRAFT, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: + MAY BE THE HAWK+.

THE PROPOSED PURCHASE OF 12 TORNADOES COSTING \$1.8 BILLION WAS PART OF A WEAPONS PROCUREMENT WORTH \$4.5 BILLION UNDER THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

LONDON NEWSPAPERS RECENTLY REPORTED THAT BRITISH AEROSPACE, A PARTNER IN THE TORNADO PROJECT CONSORTIUM INVOLVING WEST GERMANY AND ITALY, WAS NEGOTIATING TO SELL 20 HAWK AIRCRAFT TO MALAYSIA.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID ANY PURCHASE OF THE ALTERNATIVE TO THE TORNADOES WOULD BE NEGOTIATED WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND NOT DIRECTLY WITH THE MANUFACTURER.

+IN THE PAST WE WERE CRITICISED FOR BUYING DIRECT FROM THE MANUFACTURERS.... ALLEGEDLY SUCH METHOD WAS FRAUDULENT, + HE SAID.  
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1504MST 25 05 90

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U EB47 AAE  
MAHATHIR-TORNADOES 3 KUALA LUMPUR R'R'R'R'

HE SAID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DID NOT MANUFACTURE THE AIRCRAFT BUT BRITAIN HAD SEVERAL STATE-OWNED COMPANIES WHICH WOULD SUPPLY THE EQUIPMENT TO BE BOUGHT.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IF THERE WERE ACCUSATIONS OF FRAUDULENT GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT DEALINGS IN THE WEAPONS PROCUREMENT, THEN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IMPLICATED TOO.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID HE WAS PERFELXED BY THE MANY ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE PURCHASE OF THE AIRCRAFT.

HE SAID DETRACTORS WERE ONLY OUT TO FIND FAULT.

ASKED ON WHO WOULD FILL THE VACANCY FOR THE OTHER DEWAN RAKYAT DEPUTY SPEAKER POST VACATED BY D.P VIJANDRAN, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE CHOICE OF CANDIDATE WOULD BE DECIDED THROUGH CONSENSUS AMONG OF ALL BARISAN NASIONAL COMPONENT PARTIES.

DATUK HAJI MOHAMED AMIN DAUD IS THE OTHER DEPUTY SPEAKER.

THE CHOSEN CANDIDATE WOULD BE MADE KNOWN LATER, HE SAID.--

BERNAMA

1524MST 25 05 90