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MAHATHIR-IRAQ R'R'R'R'
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SEREMBAN, AUG 17 (BERNAMA) -- SAUDI ARABIA'S REQUEST FOR MALAYSIA TO SEND TROOPS TO HELP DEFEND THE KINGDOM AGAINST A POSSIBLE ATTACK BY IRAQ WILL BE REFERRED TO THE CABINET FOR CONSIDERATION, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD SO FAR NOT MADE ANY DECISION ON THE REQUEST.

SHAIK ABDUL AZIS, A SPECIAL ENVOY OF KING FAHD, CONVEYED THE SAUDI MONARCH'S REQUEST TO THE YANG DI-PERTUAN AGONG SULTAN AZLAN SHAH YESTERDAY.

+THE REQUEST OF THE SAUDI KING WAS CONVEYED TO THE YANG DI-PERTUAN AGONG. WHEN I RECEIVE (THE REQUEST), I WILL HAVE IT DISCUSSED BY THE CABINET FOR A DECISION,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS AFTER A MEETING WITH BARISAN NASIONAL (BN) SUPPORTERS AT THE SEREMBAN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL HALL HERE.

AT A DIALOGUE EARLIER WITH SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICERS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA DID NOT WISH TO TAKE SIDES IN THE GULF CRISIS BUT SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE PLIGHT SAUDI ARABIA WAS IN.

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MAHATHIR-IRAQ 2 SEREMBAN

+WE DO NOT SIDE ANY COUNTRY. OUR POSITION IS THAT WE ARE WITH ISLAM,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IRAQ AND IRAN HAD ALSO REQUESTED MALAYSIA'S SUPPORT WHEN THEY WERE AT WAR BUT MALAYSIA DID NOT WANT TO SUPPORT ANY WAR BETWEEN MUSLIMS, HE ADDED.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID MALAYSIA MIGHT EMULATE THE POSITION SAUDI ARABIA HAD ADOPTED IF IT FACED A SIMILAR THREAT.

SAYING THAT MALAYSIA SYMPATHISED WITH SAUDI ARABIA, HE SAID EVEN IF MALAYSIA WAS PREPARED TO SEND ITS TROOPS TO THE KINGDOM, THE STRENGTH OF MALAYSIA'S FORCES WOULD NOT BE COMPARABLE TO THE IRAQI MILITARY WHICH HAD ONE MILLION SOLDIERS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE FELT THAT IRAQ SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM KUWAIT AND ALL THE ARAB STATES SHOULD RESOLVE ANY DIFFERENCES AMONG THEMSELVES. -- MORE

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MAHATHIR-IRAQ 3 SEREMBAN

ASKED WHETHER UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA VICE-CHANCELLOR PROF SYED HUSSEIN ALATAS WOULD RESIGN, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR REPEATED HIS STATEMENT MADE IN SHAH ALAM YESTERDAY THAT AS FAR AS HE KNEW PROF SYED HUSSEIN HAD TAKEN LEAVE FOR TWO MONTHS.

+MANY PEOPLE HAVE SPECULATED ON THE MATTER BUT AS FAR AS I KNOW IT IS NOT TRUE UNLESS SOMETHING HAS BEEN DONE WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE,+ HE SAID.

ASKED IF THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ACCEPT PROF SYED HUSSEIN'S RESIGNATION IF HE WANTED TO RESIGN, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT ASK HIM TO RESIGN BUT IF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR WANTED TO RESIGN THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT HAVE THE POWER TO STOP HIM.

SPEAKING TO THE BN SUPPORTERS, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, WHO IS BN CHAIRMAN, SAID THEY SHOULD SUPPORT THE BN CANDIDATE REGARDLESS OF THE PARTY HE OR SHE REPRESENTED.

+SUPPORT MUST BE GIVEN TO WHOEVER THE CANDIDATE IS. NO ONE SHOULD QUESTION THIS ... OTHERWISE WE MAY FACE DEFEAT,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID BN MEMBERS SHOULD REALISE THAT THEY WERE IN THE COALITION NOT BECAUSE OF PERSONALITIES BUT BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED THAT ONLY THE BN COULD ENSURE THEM A FUTURE.

ALSO PRESENT WERE MENTERI BESAR DATUK HAJI MOHAMED ISA ABDUL SAMAD, MCA PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR LING LIONG SIK, MIC PRESIDENT DATUK SERI S.SAMY VELLU, GERAKAN PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR LIM KENG YAIK, INFORMATION MINISTER DATUK MOHAMED RAHMAT AND PARTI PESAKA BUMIPUTERA BERSATU (PBB) DEPUTY PRESIDENT DATUK ALFRED JABU. --
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