

0716

U E824 AAE

MAHATHIR-MALAYSIANS (REQUESTED REPETITION)

BM

KUALA LUMPUR, AUG 31 (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS EXPRESSED RELIEF OVER THE SAFE RETURN EARLY THIS MORNING OF THE LAST BATCH OF 90 MALAYSIANS FROM THE CRISIS TORN GULF REGION.

INTERVIEWED AT MERDEKA SQUARE HERE WHERE HE WAS ATTENDING THE NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS, HE SAID THAT INITIAL FEARS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO REALISE THE SAFE RETURN OF MALAYSIANS FROM THE AREA AFTER IRAQ'S INVASION OF KUWAIT ON AUG 2 HAD BEEN PROVEN TO BE UNFOUNDED.

HE SAID THE RETURN OF THE LAST GROUP, WHICH INCLUDED 43 FOREIGNERS, WAS THE RESULT OF ALL-OUT EFFORTS BY WISMA PUTRA AND VARIOUS OTHER PARTIES TO BRING A QUICK END TO THE PROBLEM.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID MALAYSIA WAS NEVERTHELESS STILL CONCERNED ABOUT FOREIGN NATIONALS PARTICULARLY THOSE OF FRIENDLY COUNTRIES STILL IN THE BELEAGUERED GULF REGION.

HE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT TO HELP ALL THOSE NOT INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT TO LEAVE THE AREA SAFELY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. -- MORE
0247MST 31 08 90

U E825 AAE

MAHATHIR-MALAYSIANS 2 KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR HOPED THAT EFFORTS BY UNITED NATIONS (UN) SECRETARY-GENERAL JAVIER PEREZ DE CUELLAR TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM WOULD HELP DEFUSE TENSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

+WE HOPE THAT THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS, BOTH OF WHICH ARE OUR FRIENDS WILL BE RESOLVED THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS RATHER THAN THROUGH ARMED CONFRONTATION,+ HE SAID.

ON MALAYSIA'S ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT AN END TO THE TENSION, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE COUNTRY HAD ACTED THROUGH THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL BY ENSURING THAT ALL ACTIONS TAKEN WERE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE UN CHARTER. -- BERNAMA
0249MST 31 08 90