

# M'SIA TO HELP ANC

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By Wong Chun Wai

**KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has pledged to provide assistance, including possible financial aid, to the African National Congress.**

Malaysia is also ready to help the ANC with its housing programme to shelter the party's exiles returning to South Africa from neighbouring countries without jobs and land of their own.

Dr Mahathir gave the assurance to ANC deputy president Nelson Mandela when they met for over an hour at the Prime Minister's office here today.

The 72-year-old anti-apartheid leader arrived here yesterday to begin a four-day official visit. He is on a 20-day tour of the Asia-Pacific region.

Foreign Ministry deputy secretary-general Datuk Abdul Majid Mohamed told newsmen after the meeting that aid to the ANC would have to be worked out by the Cabinet.

"The Prime Minister promised to discuss with the Cabinet the size and form of assistance and to work out a definite

programme to channel it to the ANC," he said.

Asked whether Mr Mandela had sought monetary aid, Datuk Majid said Mr Mandela had mentioned a certain amount of money.

He said Dr Mahathir told Mr Mandela that the quantum offered had to be discussed by the Cabinet first.

"Dr Mahathir could not make an immediate pledge as the matter would have to be discussed with the Treasury and other relevant government agencies," he said.

Datuk Majid said Malaysia was prepared to offer the ANC expertise in areas such as housing, and technical and training facilities.

"Mr Mandela said housing is an urgent area and he is attracted to the idea (of Malaysia helping out)."

Datuk Majid said Malaysia had been providing assistance to other countries on a government-to-government basis but would have to make an exception in the case of the ANC.

He said Mr Mandela also briefed Dr Mahathir on the latest situation in South Africa and how he had been seeking assistance from other countries to meet the needs of the ANC exiles.

"Mr Mandela told the Prime Minister that the ANC is taking every initiative to negotiate with the South African Government for a peaceful political settlement which includes the right to vote by all," he added.

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# outbreak of violence

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Mr Mandela, he said, also expressed regret over the violence that had erupted in South Africa.

"But he denied that this has anything to do with inter-tribal differences.

"He said this was the kind of perception spread by the whites who are trying to paint a picture of instability and extreme differences aimed at creating fear."

Datuk Majid said Mr Mandela had alleged that the recent violence was the work of the South African security forces.

It has been reported that the ANC and the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party were locked in a bloody township war in Natal for political supremacy.

No fewer than 760 people have been reportedly killed in fighting between the two black movements since September.

Datuk Majid said Mr Mandela alleged that certain sections of the security forces did not wish to see the ANC getting stronger and succeeding in negotiating a peaceful settlement.

"He said the South African Government has not done sufficient to control the action of their own security forces."

Mr Mandela told the Prime Minister that he had enough evidence to back his charges.

On talks between the ANC and the Inkatha, Datuk Majid said Mr Mandela told Dr Mahathir that the entire ANC executive committee would meet Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi when he returned to South Africa.

The meeting will be the first of its kind with the Zulu chief as Mr Mandela has until now refused to meet Mr Buthelezi, accusing him of trying to shoot his way into the ANC negotiations on black-power sharing with President F.W. de Klerk.