

CNS5143

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Mahathir-Kuwait

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KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 2 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Malaysia and other Islamic nations are prepared to mediate to help resolve the Gulf crisis if the United Nations is unable to do so.

The Prime Minister said he had contacted Iraq on the matter but there was no response. Instead, he added, Iraq sent more troops to Kuwait and even threatened to attack Saudi Arabia.

+We are aware of and do not like the way the United States has become involved in the Gulf crisis,+ he said when winding up debate at the Umno general assembly here.

+We do not like US involvement in the Gulf crisis because of the Jewish influence, and we are aware of the possibility of Israel making use of the situation,+ he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was clarifying Malaysia's support for the United Nations Security Council resolution authorising use of force to drive Iraq out of Kuwait if it did not withdraw by Jan 15. Several Umno delegates had voiced dissatisfaction over Malaysia's support for the resolution. -- more

♥02/12/21-15MST

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He said it must be realised that Kuwait had been occupied and its people were suffering, and in such a situation, they would welcome help from anyone.

+If the Islamic nations are prepared to send a strong force to do the job, it would not be necessary for us to support the UN resolution. But we ourselves are not prepared while the other Islamic nations are also not in a position to raise a force strong enough to face Iraq,+ he said.

The Prime Minister said Saudi Arabia, under such a situation, would welcome the help of nations, irrespective of religious belief.

He said that according to sources that could be believed, many Kuwaitis had died or been tortured.

On the economic sanctions against Iraq, which was agreed to by Malaysia, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said it would take a long time to be effective. A similar embargo against South Africa had not brought positive results despite being in force for 10 years, he said. -- more

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Malaysia, he said, does not condone the action of a strong nation invading a weak nation or threats made by big powers, and it could not make an exception for Iraq.

Malaysia supported the UN resolution as it wanted to give the opportunity to Iraq to move out of Kuwait within 45 days, and wanted the Gulf crisis to end as soon as possible, he said. -- Bernama

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