

♥23/02/23-47MST
R GE 23-02 00167
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Mahathir - Gulf

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(Embargo: For release at 11 o'clock tonight) (e)

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 23 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight the Gulf War, which had caused the deaths of thousands of people in Iraq and Kuwait, is a futile war for Iraq and a loss to Muslims.

The Prime Minister therefore urged Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait quickly to prevent more lives being lost and to enable everyone involved to put a stop to the war.

+Malaysia urges Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait quickly so that fewer lives will be lost because of this futile war.+

+Malaysia also urges the United States and its allies to honour Resolution 678 which does not permit Iraq's destruction,+ he said at a dinner hosted by the Muslim Lawyers Association of Malaysia.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said Malaysia did not support any encroachment by anyone, whether small powers, medium powers or super powers. -- more

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Mahathir - Gulf 2 Kuala Lumpur (Embargo)

He said Malaysia supported United Nations Security Council Resolution 678 to save Iraq that is to give a strong warning that force would be used if Iraq did not withdraw from Kuwait.

The Prime Minister also said invading Kuwait was not the way for Iraq to champion Islam.

+If Iraq wished to champion the rights of Muslims and was willing to face any opposition including war with the United States, the best way will be to attack Israel and not Kuwait.+

+If because of its attack on Israel, Iraq were to face retaliatory attack from the United States, then the whole Islamic world will support Iraq,+ Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said.

He said Iraq launched a guided missile attack on Israel not to destroy Israel, or help the people of Palestine but only to involve Israel in the war to get the support and sympathy of Muslims.

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Mahathir - Gulf 3 Kuala Lumpur (rptn:correcting para six)

The Prime Minister also wanted members of the association to enhance the image of Islam in the legal field.

Association President Zaid Ibrahim suggested the formation of an umbrella organisation for legal bodies to further streamline the system of court administration.

He proposed that the organisation's members be drawn from officers of the Ministry of Justice, Legal Department, Judicial bodies, representatives of Bar Councils and law lecturers.

He said such an organisation could co-ordinate planning and action in facing any problem connected with the law.

He said the proposed organisation would be similar to the Singapore Law Academy which organised courses on law, enhanced discipline and skills of legal professionals.

At the function, the association presented the meritorious award to Datin Kamsiah Abdul Majid. -- Bernama (ends corrected rptn)