

Government stand sought over Myanmar refugees

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. -- Umno will urge the Government to take a stand on the plight of thousands of Muslims in Myanmar who are fleeing the country and seeking refuge in southeastern Bangladesh, party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said the Umno Supreme Council meeting which he chaired today discussed their plight, as it felt that the Government must view the matter seriously.

It was reported that thousands of Muslims fleeing from the Myanmar army were reported to be falling

sick from diseases like malaria, measles, chicken pox and diarrhoea in the refugee camps in southeastern Bangladesh.

Most of them were entering Dechua Palong in Bangladesh where it has been reported that doctors had treated more than 12,000 of the camp's 25,000 refugees.

The Prime Minister also told reporters that Malaysia had not decided whether to attend the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Unced) at Rio de Janeiro in June.

He said the Government

was studying whether the 1,000 non-governmental organisations which had been invited to the conference were really interested in finding solutions (to environmental problems), to review policies or intended to gather to "attack specific countries".

He said this was the Government's anxiety and was studying the motive for those attending the conference.

He expressed fear that Unced would become a "circus" if those attending the conference had other motives.