

Dr M: We won't back US move to oust Saddam

LANGKAWI: Malaysia will not support any move by the United States to oust Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said it would be different if Iraq's neighbours sought outside help to protect their sovereignty against aggressors.

"But if there are no such problems and war breaks out merely to dethrone Saddam Hussein, we will oppose it," he said after opening the 1,500-room Delima Resort here.

"We will not support the use of force (against Saddam)."

He was asked about reports of the US building up its military presence in the Middle East, which might lead to a new attack on Iraq.

Malaysia had supported the UN Security Council Resolution 678 which authorised the use of force against Iraq if it failed to withdraw from Kuwait by Jan 15, 1991.

On claims by the US that Iraq was not fully complying to UN ceasefire terms, Dr Mahathir said Iraq had already allowed a UN team to inspect its facilities.

"They allowed them (the UN team) to check their ministry (buildings) and nothing was found. We should believe the UN inspectorate," he said.

Asked about reports that Saddam still claimed Kuwait as Iraq's 19th province, he said:

"Many (countries) had claimed Sabah as their territory but we still recognised (them) and maintained normal relations," he said, adding that Malaysia will not support aggression anywhere in the world.
