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MALAYSIA TO DECIDE ON SERBIA'S PRESENCE AT NAM MEETING
Mahathir-Bosnia

22 (P)
KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 10 (Bernama) -- The Cabinet will decide on Wednesday on Malaysia's stand if Yugoslavia is represented by Serbia at the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) meeting in Jakarta next month, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

+We will discuss and have to re-access the situation if Serbia represents Yugoslavia at the meeting,+ he added.

Yesterday, the Prime Minister said Malaysia might sever diplomatic ties with Yugoslavia over its atrocities in Bosnia-Hergovina.

Malaysia last month downgraded its embassy in Belgrade to a chancellery in protest against former Yugoslavia's defiance of U.N. sanctions and its continued aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Cabinet meeting would also study Umno Youth's proposal that the Government revoke all business contracts given to Yugoslavian companies in Malaysia, he told reporters after opening the Sixth Islamic Academy of Sciences (IAS) Conference on Environment and Development in the Islamic World at the Islamic Centre here. -- more

▼10/08/12-57MST

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+The Government has to study first whether the companies belong to Croatia, Serbia or Bosnia as we cannot simply revoke all the tenders+ he added.

On the call for the United Nations to take military action against Belgrade to restore peace there, Dr Mahathir said: +We have to study first who to use force and whose force.+

He also said that the proposal that NAM should focus more on economic rather than political matters to suit current needs should be studied as the organisation still had a political role and relevance.

In his speech opening the conference, Dr Mahathir said Islamic countries must improve their educational and scientific research facilities so as to ensure the capacity of the Ummah (Islamic community) to keep up with scientific and technological advancements and to improve on them.

In order to accelerate this process and to improve the quality of life of the Ummah, Muslim scientists must accumulate as much knowledge as possible so as to enable them to develop environmentally sound and appropriate technology, he added. -- more

▼10/08/13-11MST

+The research findings and technical data will also serve to strengthen the bases of our negotiators as they negotiate the various environment-related conventions and protocols,+ he said.

He said scholars, scientists and researchers in the Muslim world must not lag behind if they wish to help the Ummah expand and consolidate their scientific and technological base, particularly in the vital area of research and development.

+The strong and sound base of science and technology is important to underpin our efforts to solve the problems of food, defence, security, shelter, fuel and energy, health and pollution, exploitation of mineral resources and the enhancement of agricultural and industrial production,+ he added.

The Prime Minister also stressed the need to enhance South-South co-operation while North-South interaction and co-operation was central to the prevention of global environmental degradation and the need for sustained economic growth. -- more

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+The Islamic countries must play their part in achieving this as the scientists of the Islamic world could contribute towards South-South co-operation in the field of environment and development,+ he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was up to the scientists in developing countries to devise and modify the technologies of the developed countries to suit the needs of the developing countries.

Muslim scientists must project to the world the true meaning of human civilisation and progress for it is enjoined upon Muslims to acquire knowledge not for evil but for the good of mankind, he added.

+I believe that the many challenges and difficulties that we face can be overcome if we adhere closely to the true teachings of Islam that led to the Golden Age of Islam,+ he said.

He also touched on the Malaysia's vision of becoming a developed nation. He said to be a developed nation did not mean merely to achieve the same Gross National Product (GNP) per capita of the rich countries.

An equally important factor was the acquisition of knowledge that could contribute towards national security and scientific and technological independence. -- more

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+Without these, we will always be supplicants, dependent of the charity of others,+ he added.

Scientists from Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Tunis, Turkey and the United States are attending the five-day conference.

IAS is a non-governmental organisation based in Amman, Jordan -- Bernama