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Rpting, correcting last para

Mahathir-PAS

MAHATHIR SAYS PAS TELEGRAM POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED

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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 5th (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad described the telegram which he received from PAS today regarding events in Bosnia-Herzegovina as politically motivated.

He said he could not understand why they sent; the telegram now, about a month after PAS held its Oct 11 meeting acknowledging the sufferings endured by the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and at time when Umno was holding its general assembly.

+I think it's; politically motivated. If they had decided on the matter on Oct 11, they should have sent the telegram immediately, + he told a news conference after chairing Umno Supreme Council meeting here tonight.

Mahathir said PAS, in the telegram sent by its president Haji Fadzil Noor, offered three suggestions to the government to help Bosnia-Herzegovina.

They suggested that the government assemble troops to be sent to Bosnia-Herzegovina and motivated Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) countries to deploy forces in it; defence, he said.

He said PAS also urged the government to influence OIC countries to issue an ultimatum to the United Nations to take stern measure to save Bosnia-Herzegovina's independence, failing which Malaysia and OIC countries should re-consider its membership in the organisation. --more

▼06/11/00-58MST

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Mahathir-PAS 2 Kuala Lumpur

+What we regret is that the decision was made on Oct 11 but was only sent to us on Nov 5 ... since then many Bosnians have been slaughtered. he said.

+What we don't understand is why wait until a month (to tell us),+ he said.

Dr Mahathir said that even without the insistence of PAS, the government and Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM) had initiated several measures to help the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, such as collecting donations, supplying winter clothing for them and providing temporary protection to their children.

He said it was easy for PAS to thrust the responsibility such as sending troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina on the government.

+Because we are a responsible government, we cannot take irresponsible actions like sending troops which we cannot afford. Even strong countries and other Islamic countries did not send their troops,+ he said. --more

▼06/11/01-10MST

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Mahathir-PAS 3 (last) Kuala Lumpur

+Sorry, I think it's (the telegram) more domestic politics than the real intention of helping the Bosnians,+ he said.

Describing the telegram as +telegram politik+, Dr Mahathir said he felt sad if the fate of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina was used for political purposes.

He said,+I've to make this clear for, I fear, if I don't it will be used as a political issue to gain support for PAS for its politics, not in Islamic politics.+

Mahathir said the government had already expressed its willingness to send its troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina under the OIC Or United Nations' banner if required too.

He asked whether PAS, which during the Gulf War expressed desire to send 3,000 members to support Iraq, was willing to do the same for Bosnia-Herzegovina. --Bernama

▼06/11/01-22MST