

Government to study Sabah ruling A step backward,

By Jeffrey Ramayah

PETALING JAYA, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today described as "a step backward" the new ruling by the Sabah Government that all Malaysians and foreigners entering Sabah from Labuan and Sarawak must produce their passports.

The Prime Minister said the Federal Government was doing its best to foster integration between Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah and Sarawak.

Speaking to reporters at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Subang before leaving for Jakarta to attend the Non-Aligned Movement meeting, he said the move by the Sabah Government would not help in integration efforts.

Asked what the Federal Government proposed to do about it, Dr Mahathir said: "We have to study the matter in detail before deciding what to do next."

It has been reported that the Sabah Immigration Department is working out details for implementing the new ruling.

The ruling was contained in a State Government gazette signed by Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan in November last year which was to be enforced from Jan 1 this year.

Previously, all Malaysians and foreigners could enter Sabah from Labuan and Sarawak without having to produce their passports.

On NAM, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia's main concern at the summit would be to call for immediate action to prevent the killing and torture of innocent people in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He said Malaysia would express grave concern over the genocide and atrocities taking place there and

would call for prompt and immediate action to be taken to save innocent people.

"We do not understand why we have to wait for action to be taken when the killings and torture are so clear and evident.

"Why must we wait for the United Nations General Assembly which will be held next month?" he asked.

Dr Mahathir said when Iraq invaded Kuwait, Malaysia supported a resolution for the United Nations to act accordingly to free Kuwait.

"During the invasion, there were no killings and yet prompt action was taken against the Baghdad administration.

"In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Serbs are killing innocent people and torturing others in concentration camps."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia opposed Serbia and Montenegro's claim to be the successor State to Yugoslavia because the original States that made up Yugoslavia were no longer a federation.

He said many other countries have also not recognised the Government in Belgrade.

He said Serbia claimed to be the representative of Yugoslavia but not many countries have accepted this.

"As such we feel that the existing Government should not be represented in NAM or the UN," he added.

Dr Mahathir said all countries should strive to stop the atrocities that were taking place in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He also said the United Nations should act now to prevent these atrocities and should not wait until the General Assembly meeting.

He added it was the responsibility of the United Nations to prevent these atrocities.

on passports
says PM