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Mahathir - soldiers

MAHATHIR EXTENDS CONDOLENCES TO LATE SOLDIERS' FAMILIES

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PULAU PINANG, July 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed sorrow over the killing of two Malaysian soldiers serving under the United Nations in Mogadishu, Somalia, last night and extended his condolences to their families.

"I am very sad, this should not have happened as Malaysia only wants to help and not fight with anybody," he said.

He said the Government would do everything possible to bring back the bodies of the two soldiers.

Two other soldiers were injured in an attack which occurred near the Gulled Hotel on October 21 Route in eastern Mogadishu at about 10 p.m.

They were Sjt Sjn Azman Mohamad Tahir of the 21st Commando Unit and Kpl Ghani Binyoi of the 6th Royal Ranger Regiment.

Sjn Zaidi Hanafiah of the 22nd commando unit and L/Kpl Ahmad Abdul Rahman of the 21st Commando Unit were injured. -- more

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Dr Mahathir said the Malaysian soldiers were sent there to safeguard peace and not to wage war with anyone but there seemed to be irresponsible groups which did not value Malaysia's efforts and had attacked the soldiers.

On the Financial Times report that Standard Chartered Bank was investigating the disappearance of US\$10,000 in gold coins, allegedly given to a Malaysian Minister, Dr Mahathir said, "We can't make any comment at this moment because we don't know, it's just something very vague that comes up like that." -- Bernama

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