

Bosnia: Malaysia seeks backing to find speedy solution

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. — Malaysia is seeking the support of developing countries to find a speedy solution to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina following the latest decision by the United Nations to withdraw peacekeeping troops from Gorazde.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad intends to convey this view to leaders of Third World countries, Muslim nations and friendly parties in other countries, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

Speaking to reporters after opening the World Bahasa Melayu Congress here, Anwar said the Prime Minister had spoken to him of the intention before he left for South Africa for a five-day visit this morning.

However, Anwar said it was not easy to find a solution to the conflict.

He said the UN which had been given the mandate to resolve the conflict had utterly neglected and abdicated its responsibility.

Anwar was asked to comment on the UN announcement that it would withdraw peacekeeping troops from Gorazde, one of the so-called "safe-areas" declared

by the world body.

The UN said that 90 Ukrainian and 180 British peacekeepers in Gorazde would be removed by mid-September, leaving behind a small force of UN military observers and forward air controllers.

Anwar said Malaysia had long doubted the UN's desire and ability to deal with the conflict.

"The UN has been extremely ineffective and irresponsible in not being able to protect or show firm commitment to protect the safe areas in Bosnia.

"It is a delaying tactic which will lead to a surrender (of Gorazde) and reward the aggressor," he said.

Replying to another question, Anwar said the Foreign Workers' Task Force was expected to complete soon the drafting of the guidelines to facilitate the recruitment of foreign workers in the manufacturing, plantation and construction sectors.

"It should be ready soon and an announcement on the guidelines will be made," he said.

The Malaysian Employers' Federation (MEF) said in a statement last week that the procedure for re-

cruiting foreign workers was unclear following the Government's decision to allow only the task force to bring in the workers.

The employment agencies were now only allowed to bring in foreign workers as domestic maids and shop assistants.

Asked to comment on the problem arising from the proposed privatisation of the water supply division of the Kelantan Public Works Department, Anwar said the State authorities should postpone the decision pending further negotiations with the workers.

It was reported that some 500 workers of the State water supply division had staged a walkout during a briefing yesterday on the privatisation in protest over the terms and conditions offered.

The workers had also refused to accept the option letters issued during the briefing.

Anwar said the understanding and support of the workers were vital to the success of the privatisation project.

"What is the point of talking about efficiency and profits if the workers' interests are ignored," he said.