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Abdullah-feedback

ABDULLAH SEEKS FEEDBACK ON AHMAD MOKHTAR

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 28 (Bernama) -- Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi is keeping a tight schedule in Lima meeting with several parties to get the latest feedback on Malaysia's ambassador in Peru and others who are still being held captive by guerrillas there.

"Today (Friday in Peru) I have held meetings with two ambassadors who were recently released by the rebels, a member of the International Red Cross and a member of the Peruvian congress," he told Bernama when contacted in the Peruvian capital.

He said during his meetings with the two former captives, Guatemalan Ambassador Jose Maria Argueta and Korean Ambassador Won Young Lee, both of them said that at the time of their release, Ahmad Mokhtar Selat was safe and in good health.

Argueta was released yesterday while Lee was among the second batch of captives released several days after they were taken hostage on December 17.

Abdullah was assigned by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to go to Lima to seek the release of Ahmad Mokhtar who is being held captive in the Japanese Ambassador's residence together with 100 others by the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) rebels who are demanding for the release of their comrades.

He said he was informed by Argueta that the situation in the Japanese Ambassador's residence was under control but expressed concern that the situation might deteriorate if the crisis was not handled carefully.

Lee expressed sadness that Ahmad Mokhtar was still being held captive and described the latter as a capable ambassador who was calm when he was detained.

Abdullah said he had also met with the Japanese Ambassador in Mexico who is being assigned to Lima, besides the International Red Cross Chief in Lima, Micheal Mining who told him that Ahmad Mokhtar was safe and in good health.

During his meeting with a member of the opposition party, Harold Forsyth Mejia, the Foreign Minister said that he had been informed of the unanimous decision of the Peruvian Congress, including the opposition's, to support the stand of the Peru government in handling the crisis.

"I told the Congressman that such support could ensure the success of President Alberto Fujimori in settling the crisis amicably," he added. --

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