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Abdullah-Famine

IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES SHOULD NOT OBSTRUCT AID TO NORTH KOREA

BANDAR PUSAT JENGKA, Aug 10 (Bernama) -- Ideological and political differences are not obstacles to Malaysia extending aid to the famine victims in North Korea, Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

He said Malaysia was willing to help the victims on humanitarian grounds.

"We understand that their ideology is different from ours, their political system is also different. But we do not want these differences to stop us from giving assistance," he told reporters after closing a youth seminar, here.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties were prepared to jointly extend aid to the famine victims in North Korea.

Abdullah said the people of North Korea had long faced starvation and were in dire need of help, especially in the form of food for both adults and children.

The BN had agreed to help because its leaders really understood the problem, he said.

Abdullah said that on a recent visit to North Korea he was briefed by the local leaders on how bad the situation was over there and the North Koreans appreciated any form of contribution from Malaysia.

He said Malaysians, who were well-known for their caring spirit, would surely give serious attention to the problem.

He lauded the efforts of a local newspaper to raise funds for the famine victims and said that the Foreign Ministry's Puspanita would announce another form of assistance for the North Koreans soon. -- BERNAMA

ROS JK