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Malaysian envoys kept informed about events at home

reports on "Dewan Rakyat" by Hayati Hayatudin
MALAYSIAN ambassadors are always briefed on issues happening in the country while Wisma Putra keeps them informed on the Government's stand on international matters.

For example, they have been informed of the currency crisis and action by 34 United States Congressmen to move a draft resolution in the US Congress, calling on Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to apologise for his alleged anti-Jewish remarks or resign as Prime Minister.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said they were also told of the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act 1996 passed by the US which threatened sanctions against companies which invested more than US\$20 million (RM66 million) in either country.

Petronas has a 30 per cent stake in the US\$2 billion South Pars gas project. The other two partners are Total SA of France and Gazprom of Russia.

"This issue is important and it is an issue to impose sanctions on Petronas.

"It is not an issue between Malaysia and America but an international issue that attracts the whole world," Abdullah said in reply to a supplementary question from Lim Guan Eng (DAP-Kota Melaka).

"Malaysia knows other countries' stand so the issue of us defending our position stands but if the US remains stubborn and wants to go ahead with its actions, that is its decision.

"However, we will continue to defend our stand as the issue concerned has connections with our pride, sovereignty and dignity," Abdullah said.

He said if stationing an ambassador in a particular country was no longer regarded necessary, they could be moved to a different place.

In reply to the original question from Abdul Rahman Sulaiman (BN-Parit Buntar), Abdullah said the size of a diplomatic mission depended on how important the country was to Malaysia.

It also depended on the quality of trade with the country and how many Malaysians were living there.

Since 1992, Malaysia had taken various steps to reduce expenditure, especially when computers were used, which reduced employment needs.

There are countries which still do not have Malaysian diplomatic missions.

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