

# Malaysia does not **support any** separatist **group**

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By C. CELESTINE

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia does not support any separatist group or individual using violence to achieve their political objective in Thailand or elsewhere, said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar.

Denying reports in Thai newspapers that the separatists met in Kuala Lumpur to plan the recent bombings in Hat Yai and Betong, he said: "Malaysia practises the policy of non-interference in the internal matters of other countries, especially among Asean members."

Malaysia does not want anything to jeopardise the good bilateral relations with Thai-country to be used as a training ground to topple any dem-

ocratically-elected government, Syed Hamid told reporters at his office here yesterday. Early this -week, several Thai papers, quoting Thai defence sources, named three Muslim groups — the National Revolution Movement, Pulo and Mujahidin — as having held talks here last month to plan the bombings in southern Thailand.

Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was also reported as having said that he would meet his Malaysian counterpart Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad this month to discuss the issue.

Pulo has since refuted the allegations against it.

The Government has informed Thailand that Malaysia does not support any separatist activities or allowed the

ocratically-elected government, Syed Hamid told reporters at his office here yesterday.

He added that Malaysia was willing to work with Thai authorities to help or gather information that would lead to the arrests of the culprits.

He reiterated a recent assurance by Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak that security at the Malaysian-Thai border had been beefed up.

Regarding an advice by the United States Department of State to its citizens not to visit Malaysia, Syed Hamid said the Government regretted the statement.

He added that the safety of those visiting Malaysia was assured.