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Pakistan agrees to medical team

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf has given the green light for Malaysia to send its Armed Forces medical team to the refugee camps in Chaman, Pakistan.

Musharraf agreed to the arrangement in a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad earlier today.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today that the armed forces medical team can now proceed to Chaman.

"Dr Mahathir informed me of this development today after speaking to Gen Musharraf," Syed Hamid said, adding that he had conveyed the message to the Defence Ministry for further action.

He said that the arrangement, on a bilateral basis, would help ease Pakistan's burden in handling refugees from the war-torn Afghanistan.

Chaman is a Pakistan border town where a number of Afghan refugee camps are located.

Most of the camps lack medical facilities and the medical team is expected to set-up a well-equipped facility in the area soon.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced yesterday that the 30-member medical team would be headed by surgeon Lt-Kol (Dr) Jaseemudin Abu Bakar and will be accompanied by a lightly armed 36-member platoon.

Najib said the team was tentatively scheduled to leave this Saturday.

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