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`Remove sections linking BN to al-Qaeda in UN report'

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PUTRAJAYA, Wed. - Malaysia is unhappy that no attempt has been taken to remove sections of the UN Security Council's reports which link the Barisan Nasional with the al-Qaeda movement.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said any linkage of the BN with the al-Qaeda should be removed from existing reports and also should not be included in future ones.

"If the UN Security Council has done something wrong, efforts must be taken to correct it. Linking BN to al-Qaeda in the report is not correct. They cannot say they would remove it in the next report especially since the current report will become a source of reference," he said.

He was commenting on a newspaper report that the special monitoring group responsible for the report that linked the BN to the al-Qaeda would recommend to the UN Security Council to have the offending annex removed from future reports.

The chairman of the monitoring group, Michael E.G. Chandler had given a written undertaking on the matter to Malaysia's Permanent Representative to UN Tan Sri Hasmy Agam and it would also urge the Security Council to remove the annex from the electronic version on its website.

Abdullah, who is also the Home Minister, said this after hosting his ministry's Hari Raya open house here today.

It was attended by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Cabinet members and government officials.

Malaysia had earlier lodged a protest with the UN Security Council over the monitoring group's report linking BN to the al-Qaeda terrorist network. The allegation was in a chart, extracted from a book Inside al-Qaeda: Global Network of Terror written by Rohan Gunaratna.

Abdullah said the Cabinet at its meeting today thanked Wisma Putra and those involved in preparing the case involving the Sipadan and Ligitan islands which had been ruled in Malaysia's favour yesterday by the International Court of Justice.

"The decision has solved one of the problems affecting ties between Malaysia and Indonesia," he said.

Abdullah said the Cabinet meeting did not make a decision on the proposed death penalty for child rapists.

He said the matter concerned the law and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Rais Yatim was away on leave and would bring the matter to the Cabinet when he returns.

"We will discuss the matter in detail. We still have time to think it over and give our views although in general we have received many views from the public insisting the death penalty was too heavy for child rapists," he said.

He said if the Government went ahead and implemented the death penalty, the victims and their relatives may not co-operate with the authorities or would not provide the information needed especially if the accused was a family member or if it was someone known to the family.