

UN should remain in Iraq, says Dr M

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PUTRAJAYA: The United Nations should remain in Iraq despite the bombing of its headquarters in the country, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"I think the UN should be there. It should take over the management of Iraq until Iraq is able to manage itself," he said after presenting certificates to participants of a four-wheel-drive adventure to India here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir also expressed dismay at the bombing in Baghdad that killed more than 17 people, including the UN special envoy to Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello.

"I don't understand how they can

target the UN. The UN is innocent but these people do not think at all. They hit and kill people without thinking," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the perpetrators were obviously lawless.

"We are not dealing with people who are following any particular law. They do what they like," he said.

Asked if the Government would take extra measures to prevent any terrorist acts, Dr Mahathir said the rigorous steps already taken by the Government were sufficient.

"We hope nothing will happen," he said.

In Kuala Terengganu, PAS has condemned the bombing in Baghdad, say-

ing it was contrary to Islamic teachings.

Its acting president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang said it was compulsory under Islam for the public and members of the diplomatic corps to be given full protection at all times.

"Diplomats should not be mistreated even if they hail from countries which are at war with Islamic countries," he told newsmen yesterday after chairing the state exco meeting at Wisma Darul Iman.

Hadi said that since no one has claimed responsibility for the blast, it could possibly be the work of those who wanted to project Islam and Islamic movements in a bad light.