

22 MAR 2003

Khalil-Iraq

KHALIL HOPES EFFORTS TO GAIN SUPPORT FROM OPPOSITION SUCCEEDS

KUANTAN, March 22 (Bernama) -- Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob hopes that government efforts to seek the support of opposition parties in protesting the United States (US) attack on Iraq will be successful.

He said the move should not be construed as having political motives but should be seen from the humanitarian aspect.

"It is our hope that everyone, the leaders and all members of parliament present at the sitting, regardless whether they are backbenchers or the opposition, would agree to voice their opposition to the US attack on Iraq," he said.

He said this to reporters after launching a student leadership programme at the Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan St Thomas, here today.

He said the motion to be tabled in parliament reflected Malaysia's opposition to the war and cruelty in Iraq.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that Umno, which leads the Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, would table an emergency motion opposing the US attack on Iraq.

The Prime Minister hoped that the opposition parties would support the motion as a symbol of Malaysia's unity in opposing terrorism.

Khalil hoped the effort would succeed because war represented a universal humanitarian issue.

If the move received the support of the opposition parties, then it would be the second time that the government and the opposition were united after they had both supported the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty in September 1995.

-- BERNAMA

LIB AO