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Mahathir-OIC

MALAYSIA TO INITIATE INFORMAL OIC MEETING IN KL

PUTRAJAYA, Feb 15 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Malaysia is disappointed with Qatar's rejection of a proposal to hold an emergency meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) after the NAM summit in Kuala Lumpur, and will find other ways to hold a meeting.

"Our Foreign Minister has already contacted Qatar and Qatar did not agree to hold an emergency OIC meeting here. But we will try to find ways (to hold a meeting), informally maybe," the Prime Minister told reporters after meeting 11 Palestinians at his official residence, Seri Perdana, here.

Asked how Malaysia as an OIC member felt about Qatar's stand, Dr Mahathir said: "Well, we are very disappointed because we are here, so many heads of government of OIC countries who are also NAM countries are here. It is a good opportunity for us to meet and discuss informally to have a common stand on the Iraq issue."

He said the OIC meeting was mooted by Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, who had telephoned him and suggested that the meeting be held soon after the NAM summit, which runs from Feb 20-25.

Qatar currently holds the OIC presidency.

On the Iraq issue, Dr Mahathir said the latest report tabled by the United Nations weapons inspectors did not say that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction.

"All they are saying is that Iraq was not cooperating; how the Iraqis must cooperate I don't know because apparently they have shown everything...but they (the US) are still saying that we know you have something but you are not showing.

"If they know then they should go there," he said.

-- BERNAMA

SR RV YBY