

27 APR 2003

Najib-Views

MALAYSIA TO STRESS NEED TO HEAR VIEWS OF DEVELOPING WORLD

BATU PAHAT, April 27 (Bernama) -- The leaders of Russia, Germany and France will be told of the need to consider the views of the developing world and Islamic nations when shaping the new world order, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today.

He said Malaysia would take the opportunity provided by the proposed visits of these leaders to convey its stand on the matter.

"We want to convey a message to the world that the interests of the third world, Islamic countries and developing nations should be considered in determining the coming world order.

"We want them to know that power does not determine everything," he told reporters after opening the Parit Sulong Umno Division meeting here.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and French President Jacques Chirac, who have strongly opposed the United States-led invasion of Iraq, are expected to visit Malaysia soon.

Malaysia was honoured as the impending visits showed that these leaders wanted to know Malaysia's views on various global issues, he said.

"It is a reflection of their interest to hear other views and not necessarily of the United States'," said Najib, who is an Umno vice-president.

He said Malaysia and other Islamic countries realised that their voices had been increasingly drowned out in the international arena by the practice of unilateralism by certain countries.

"We are against unilateralism," said Najib.

On another matter, Najib was non-committal when asked whether Malaysia would be signing an agreement for the purchase of the Russian-made Sukhoi SU-30MK fighter jets during Putin's visit.

"We wait and see," he said when asked on the possibility of Malaysia buying 18 of the "Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MRCA).

Najib also said he agreed with Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi that The Economist magazine should apologise for carrying a baseless article on Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He wondered how a foreign writer who had spent just one month in the country could come up with such a critical article on the prime minister and his ways of administering the country.

The writer of the article had been unfair and one-sided, especially when commenting on mega projects, he said.

-- BERNAMA

MHI YBY