

15 MAR 2003

Hishammuddin-Peace

PEACE GATHERING II IN KL IF WAR BREAKS OUT

ALOR STAR, March 15 (Bernama) -- A second People's Alliance for Peace Malaysia (Aman Malaysia) gathering will be launched if war breaks out between the United States and Iraq soon.

Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said: "We must let the people express their objection against, and hatred for, war and we may do this with a second peace gathering in Kuala Lumpur.

He spoke to reporters after a meeting with the state youth association leaders here.

The Umno youth chief said the second gathering followed a chain of protests around the globe which would become the voice of the world. The Aman Malaysia secretariat was working with foreign countries on the matter, he added.

"We have no choice but to use a global voice and this way United States' leaders will hear us - that we don't want war and terrorism," he said.

On Feb 23, about 200,000 people of all races converged at Stadium Nasional in Bukit Jalil to present Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad with 2.8 million signatures in support of world peace.

"We want to ensure that world peace is not dependent of one superpower alone, I'm confident a global voice would compel the superpower to heed our call," he said.

Hishammuddin launched the Peace Malaysia Campaign Phase II at a Petronas petrol station here where the petroleum giant contributed 200,000 car stickers for event.

On the campaign's effectiveness, Hishammuddin said: "Sometimes things occur not because the minority want it to but because the majority do not rise against it. In this case, the global anti-war sentiment has impeded the attacks".

Meanwhile, Hishammudin said his ministry was working towards drafting a Sports Development Act to give more powers to the ministry on youth-related issues.

Currently, some youth leaders were unhappy with registration matters, entrepreneurship fund, and age limit for office-bearers. They felt these should be under the sports ministry, and not others, as it is now, Hishammuddin said.

Information gathered to draft the Act would be discussed in the Youth Consultative Council that would meet in a month or two, he said adding that they have not set a dateline to table the new Act in parliament.

-- BERNAMA

MZM JM PC