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NAM, peace rally dominate Chinese newspapers

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THE 13th Non-Aligned Movement Summit and the peace rally held on Sunday night were highlighted by the Chinese dailies yesterday.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's opening speech at the inaugural NAM Business Forum was the front-page story in Sin Chew Daily and Oriental Daily News, and his message at the peace rally at Bukit Jalil was the story of the day in Nanyang Siang Pau.

While applauding Malaysia's commitment to wooing its people and persuading NAM members to endorse the anti-war stand, the Nanyang editorial was clearly not confident about the degree of influence the rally had.

Headlined "The sad story of peace", the editorial said that the worldwide protests against a possible attack on Iraq would not stop the US from continuing its war plans.

The rally in Bukit Jalil, said the editorial, could be considered only as another in a series of events organised by peace-loving Malaysians.

"China, Russia and France, the three countries that have the veto power in the United Nation's Security Council are the only nations that have real influence."

Sin Chew Daily wanted the NAM Summit to focus on the spirit of negotiation and constructive guidance as practical approaches in resolving regional conflicts.

Issues that had led to diplomatic tensions _ including the impending war in Iraq and North Korea's nuclear crisis - must be dealt with via diplomatic channels, the editorial said.

It added that pragmatic measures such as initiating direct communication between senior US, Iraqi and North Korean officials would help iron out problems.

"We also hope NAM will play the role of moderator in this regard to pave the way for a peaceful resolution."

The Kuala Lumpur Declaration is expected to draw a clear line between global and regional scenarios.