

22/02/2003

Dr M invited to emergency OIC meeting

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has been invited by Qatar to attend the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) emergency meeting in Doha from March 4-5.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said he received the invitation at a meeting with his Qatari counterpart, Ahmad Abdullah al-Mahmoud, on Thursday.

However, he said it could not be confirmed if Dr Mahathir would attend the meeting as the Prime Minister would be on leave at that time. Dr Mahathir is scheduled to go on a two-month leave in March.

"I have informed Dr Mahathir about the invitation. Many OIC countries have asked him to attend the emergency meeting," he said, adding that Malaysia supported the emergency meeting.

Syed Hamid said Qatar had also expressed hope that the emergency meeting would not be overshadowed by the OIC informal meeting scheduled to be held in Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday.

He said Malaysia had assured Qatar that the meeting in Kuala Lumpur would be informal and would not pre-empt the emergency meeting as there will not be any conclusions made after it.

"The informal meeting will be used to exchange views regarding Iraq and the Palestine crisis," he said.

Syed Hamid said that Malaysia had also extended invitations to OIC countries that were not NAM members to attend the informal meeting.

Qatar is the current OIC chairman and 50 of 57 OIC members are also in the NAM.