

PM: We have the means to help Iraq

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian companies have the capability to help in the reconstruction of war-torn Iraq, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"We have the capability, the companies which can participate in this development process," he told reporters after opening the Malaysia International Food and Beverage Trade Fair 2004 at the Putra World Trade Centre here yesterday.

Asked if the Government would send troops to Iraq, Abdullah said: "We have to think very carefully but some form of participation in the medical services, which is very much in need, is possible."

Abdullah said Malaysia, which currently chairs the OIC and Non-Aligned Movement, hoped political stability would return to Iraq and pave the way for elections there

The Prime Minister, who is flying off to the United States today to meet President George W. Bush, said he hoped to convey the views and feelings of developing countries to the world's sole superpower.

He also said he hoped to convey to Bush the outcome of the OIC foreign ministers' meeting on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Abdullah said he could not delay the trip until the Umno division meetings were over.

"There are important decisions to be made as things are happening on the world stage," he said.