

NO69 (F)
MAHATHIR-ISRAEL
BM

ALOR STAR, APRIL 15 (BERNAMA) -- DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD TODAY CONDEMNED ISRAEL FOR ALLOWING THE INCIDENT IN JERUSALEM WHERE A JEW HAD ENTERED THE AL-AQSA MOSQUE THERE AND KILLED SEVERAL MUSLIMS IN IT.

WHILE EXPRESSING REGRET OVER THE DESPICABLE ACTION THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THIS SHOWED THE IRRESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE MOSQUE WHICH WAS LOCATED IN ITS TERRITORY.

+AS THE AUTHORITY, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE PROTECTION FOR THE MUSLIMS THERE,+ HE ADDED WHEN LAUNCHING THE HOUSING PROJECT OF THE PILGRIMS MANAGEMENT AND FUND BOARD (LUTH) AT BUKIT TINGGI, SOME 14 KM FROM HERE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THAT ISRAEL, AS A COUNTRY OCCUPYING THE TERRITORY, SHOULD PREVENT SUCH SACRILEGIOUS ACTIONS FROM OCCURRING BUT HAD FAILED TO SAFEGUARD THE SECURITY OF THE MUSLIMS ON THE WEST BANK. --BERNAMA MORE 1556/MD

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HE STRESSED THAT MALAYSIA HAD DECLARED TODAY AS PALESTINIAN SOLIDARITY DAY TO DEMONSTRATE THE SOLIDARITY OF MUSLIMS HERE WITH THEIR BRETHREN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

HE SAID THE OFFICES WERE CLOSED TODAY TO SHOW THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT'S SYMPATHY FOR THE STRUGGLES OF THE MUSLIMS IN LIBERATING PALESTINE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM KING KHALID OF SAUDI ARABIA REQUESTING THAT MALAYSIA SHOW ITS SOLIDARITY WITH FELLOW MUSLIMS BUT AS IT WAS RECEIVED LATE, GOVERNMENT OFFICES HERE WERE CLOSED A DAY LATER THAN THOSE IN SAUDI ARABIA AND THE GULF STATES.

+ALTHOUGH THE MUSLIMS IN JERUSALEM ARE FAR AWAY FROM US, WE SHOULD SHOW ISRAEL THAT WE SHARE THEIR FORTUNES AND THEIR SUFFERINGS+, HE SAID.

HE ASSURED THAT MALAYSIA WOULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN CONDEMNING THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT FOR ALLOWING SUCH SACRILEGE IN THE AL-AQSA MOSQUE. --BERNAMA MORE 1600/MD

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HE SAID THE MALAYSIAN DELEGATE AT THE UNITED NATIONS WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE DEBATE AND ASSIST IN EFFORTS TO HELP THE PALESTINIANS AND OTHER MUSLIMS GET BACK THEIR RIGHTS TO THE AL-AQSA MOSQUE.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS CONFIDENT THAT MALAYSIA WOULD PLAY AN EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE ROLE THAN CLOSING ITS GOVERNMENT OFFICES IF THE PEOPLE WERE MORE UNITED.

+HOWEVER, WE ARE STILL WEAK AND THERE ARE STILL DELIBERATE EFFORTS TO SPLIT THE MUSLIMS IN THE COUNTRY+, HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER REITERATED THE NEED TO HOLD FAST TO THE TEACHINGS OF THE QURAN WHICH ENJOINED UPON ALL MUSLIMS TO BE UNITED.

HE STRESSED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONSTANTLY RAISING THE SKILLS AND CAPABILITY OF MUSLIMS IN THE COUNTRY TO DEMONSTRATE THEMSELVES TO THE WORLD THAT THEY WERE A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH. --BERNAMA MORE 1605/MD

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ON THE HOUSING PROJECT, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IT WAS THE SECOND PROJECT IN THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAMME TO URBANIZE THE KAMPUNGS WHERE ALL THE URBAN AMENITIES WERE PROVIDED.

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE PEOPLE OF IN SUCH PROJECTS WOULD LIVE IN MORE COMFORTABLE SURROUNDINGS IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVE OF RAISING THEIR STANDARDS OF LIVING.

FIVE HUNDRED HOUSES WILL BE BUILT IN THE PROJECT, THE FIRST OF SUCH PROJECTS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY LUTH. --BERNAMA 1607/MD