

# Dr M: West lost

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LANGKAWI, Sun. — The West has relinquished its right to criticise Malaysia by failing to act to stop the brutality of the Serbs against the innocent people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We perceive that they (the West) have lost their right to criticise us because they are not willing to act in

Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"It is pointless for them to criticise us and others for not respecting human rights because they themselves are not respecting the Bosnians whose human rights are being infringed by the Serbs," he told reporters after visiting projects for the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition (Lima '93) here.

The Prime Minister said the West was not doing anything in Bosnia-Herzovi-

na although they were very critical of Malaysia, the Internal Security Act and other trivial subjects.

Replying to a question, Dr Mahathir said it was difficult to evaluate how far Malaysia had made an impact with its views expressed at the international level on Bosnia.

However, he said, the Western powers had to defend their policies on human rights and thus far they had difficulty doing this.

Asked if the military approach by the US in Somalia could resolve the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, Dr Mahathir said it was Malaysia's hope that the US would take a similar approach in dealing with the Bosnian conflict.

"Unfortunately, they are not willing to go to war with the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina unlike in Somalia where they acted fast by launching a military offensive.

"This shows they are

## right to criticise us

practising double standards," he added.

Commenting on a *New York Times* report that the Malaysian peacekeepers in Somalia were ill-prepared and untrained causing heavy casualties among US soldiers during a gunbattle in south Mogadishu recently, Dr Mahathir said they could say whatever they wanted.

"We could say their army was untrained. How could they suffer the heavy casualties against the Somalians

who are not as good as them?" he asked.

Asked about his criticism of Britain on its position on Bosnia-Herzegovina at a dinner in honour of the visiting British Prime Minister John Major on Sept 21, Dr Mahathir said it was normal for him to speak on relevant topics during a foreign leader's visit to Malaysia.

"If there is a need to make an appeal, that's the time to do it.

"This is the not first time my speech was critical. It

was more critical during former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's and Malcolm Fraser's (former Australian Prime Minister) visits to the country.

"If a speech is merely an ordinary talk, there is no point in making a speech," he added.

(In his speech at the dinner, Dr Mahathir had said making eloquent speeches, noble declarations and appeals were not enough and that there should be resolute and credible action to

end the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina.)

Asked about assistance for the family of the late Kpl Mat Aznan Awang, who was killed while on duty in Somalia, Dr Mahathir said the Government would give his family every assistance.

"We will ensure that his children will receive every necessary assistance in their education at any level.

"The Government and the nation appreciate anyone who contributes to the nation," he added.