

Parti Islam Malaysia (PAS) warns against move to recognise Israel

The Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohammed has denied a foreign news agency report that he met and had talks with Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime Minister, during his recent visit to France early July in Paris. Dr. Mahathir has however admitted that he was staying in the same hotel as Rabin at the same time, the Malaysians on the third floor while Rabin and party were occupying the second floor.

Commenting on the report, Malaysia's Islamic Party (I/PAS) president, Ustaz Fadzil Noor dismissed the prime minister's denial as "difficult to believe". "The report strengthens our belief that a move is underway to find excuses to recognise the illegal entity of Israel by Malaysia, especially in the light of the recent visit to Israel by a Malaysian businessman, Tengku Abdullah who has close relations with the leaders of Barisan Nasional, the ruling party". Ustaz Fadzil Noor was speaking at a gathering of 5000 PAS workers, who will form the party's election machinery for the coming general election which is expected to be announced any time from now.

"PAS takes a serious view of the report, and the party will oppose and will fight to its bitter end any move from any quarter towards the recognition of the illegal entity," he said. He urged the government to think twice before embarking on such adventures.

According to Ustaz Fadzil, the presence of both Dr. Mahathir and Rabin at the same time in Paris could not be just a coincidence but was so well planned that they could have a secret meeting for high level consultations. "How is it possible that France could invite two prime ministers at the same time?" he asked. "International protocol does not permit a country cannot welcome prime ministers of two countries at the same time, unless they are there attending an international conference".

"It is also impossible that the prime



Ustaz Fadzil Noor of PAS

minister did not know of Rabin's visit to Paris because Malaysia has its foreign mission in Paris and it is the responsibility of our mission to monitor all possible events surrounding the prime minister's visit to that country. Dr. Mahathir certainly should know that Rabin and Perez will be in Paris when he arrives there. If he is really sensitive, as he claims, then he should have postponed his visit to France. Besides Dr. Mahathir was staying on the third floor whilst Rabin and party were staying on the second floor of the same hotel, it is obvious the whole thing was preplanned", added Ustaz Fadzil Noor.

Meanwhile, Tengku Abdullah issued a statement confirming his visit to Israel last month but added that it was "completely a personal visit". He took pain to explain how he happened to be invited by the Israeli prime minister. He even made it appear religiously motivated to help our poor Palestine brothers to set up business and other ventures in anticipation of "the finalisation of peace process in West Asia". He of course did not forget the Israeli technology badly needed back home to "turn worked-out mining lands into agriculture as the Israelis had done in the deserts."

He also discussed tourism potential with Israelis, particularly visits by

Malaysians to "Al-Aqsa mosque and other Islamic historical sites" and thus he felt "grateful to Almighty" perhaps for being the first to help Malaysian Muslims to undertake pilgrimage to Muslim holy sites in the 'eternal capital' of Israel.

He naturally expected the Muslims to swallow these indignities, insulting their intelligence, in the true tradition of UMNO stalwarts. □