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Mahathir-Demonstration

MAHATHIR HITS OUT AT ANTI-ISRAEL DEMONSTRATORS

KOTA BAHARU, April 4 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has described as "stupid" the actions of a group of Universiti Malaya students and PAS members who held a demonstration today against the presence of an Israeli cricket team in Malaysia.

"This is a stupid act. We want to show the Israelis that Muslims are right thinking people but with this act, the objective is not met," the Prime Minister said.

He said the actions of the demonstrators would not have any effect on the Palestinian-Israeli issue "because if they go to any Arab country they will see similar actions".

"We want to show that Muslims in Malaysia can do things without being too emotional, but now these people go and demonstrate, this is stupid," Dr Mahathir said.

The Prime Minister, who was speaking to reporters during a visit to Kelantan, said that while Malaysia did not have diplomatic ties with Israel, it wanted to get especially the younger Israelis to oppose hardliners like Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

He said holding demonstrations would not in any way benefit the Palestinian struggle but instead only served to encourage the two sides to go on fighting.

"It's easy for us to demonstrate and seek a continuation of the war between the Jews and Palestinians because we are not the ones going to war.

"We live here and it's easy to demonstrate because we know that nobody shoots us if we demonstrate in Malaysia but in other countries you get shot if you hold demonstrations," he added.

The Prime Minister advised the demonstrators to stop their protests as their actions did not help the peace process between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Today's demonstrators were dispersed by police, and 49 men, aged between 20 and 48 were arrested at a mosque near Universiti Malaya's main gate after the afternoon Friday prayers. -- BERNAMA

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