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Mahathir-Israel

MAHATHIR: M'SIA REJECTS REPEATED ISRAELI REQUEST FOR TIES

PETALING JAYA, April 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysia is ignoring Israel's repeated request for diplomatic ties because Kuala Lumpur is not satisfied with the Zionist regime's attitude towards Palestine.

"We've said it that we shall not have diplomatic ties with them until they honour their agreement not to be hostile to the Palestinians," he said during a question and answer session at a symposium here on "The Islamic World and Global Cooperation: Preparing for the 21st Century" which he opened earlier.

Dr Mahathir said Israel did not give freedom to Palestine and "because of this we don't want to have diplomatic ties with them."

He was asked to clarify Malaysia's stand on ties with Israel in the light of an Israeli team taking part in an international cricket tournament in Kuala Lumpur recently.

Dr Mahathir acknowledged that the presence of the Israeli cricketers triggered public anger at the government although the idea behind allowing them here was to open the eyes of the Israelis to Islam's virtues upheld in Malaysia.

He said it was never the intention to do something that would put the Muslims at a disadvantage or to defeat the purpose of the Palestinian struggle.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia had supported the Palestinian cause more than anyone else.

"We shall not betray the Islamic struggle, but fighting for cause does not simply mean exchanging gunfire. There are other ways of doing it, " he said.

During the session Dr Mahathir reminded Muslims to be wary of Western imperialism in various forms including propagating the concept of globalisation and borderless world.

By applying this concept, the West, which is superior in strength, would easily infiltrate and overcome Muslim countries in all fields including economics, science and technology and subsequently the entire Islamic life.-- BERNAMA

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