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Pressure Israel to adhere to UN resolutions: Dr M

Hardev Kaur in Beirut

BEIRUT, Thurs: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad says the world should apply pressure and the big powers should live up to their promise that they will enforce resolutions passed by the United Nations.

"We support fully the resolution passed by the UN - Resolution 425 - but we find in some cases there seems to be a reluctance on the part of those capable of enforcing this to do so especially when somebody - their prodigy or their friends - is involved," he told a press conference here.

"We regret this, but we think that we must marshall world opinion against the Israeli attitude of not wanting to adhere by resolutions passed by the UN," he added.

The prime minister was responding to a question from a Lebanese journalist regarding Resolution 425, which calls for unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the strip of land in southern Lebanon that it has occupied since 1978 as a self-declared "security zone" to prevent guerrilla attacks on northern Israel.

Asked about the resolution passed by the US Congress to move the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Dr Mahathir said it (Congress decision) does not contribute anything to the peace process.

"The US Congress is totally insensitive to what is happening here.

"They only have a blinkered view of the situation - only one side of the story.

"This is the problem. It is made more difficult as they are not sensitive and they don't understand the conflicts in this region."

The US Congress voted reaffirming that Jerusalem should remain Israel's "undivided" capital. Congress passed the resolution with 406 votes in favour and 17 against. Palestinians described it as a declaration of war last week's non-binding US House of Representatives resolution calling on the Clinton Administration to reaffirm that Jerusalem remain Israel's "undivided capital".

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