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Bid to discredit Government

ALOR STAR, Thurs. - The sole aim of certain groups resorting to illegal demonstrations and linking them to the Palestinian intifada is to portray that the Government is cruel to the people, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He warned that this trend would also provide opportunities for the foreign media to paint a bad picture of the country.

"If this (intifada-style) happened, it will worsen the situation because Parti Keadilan Nasional and Pas are already accusing the Government of being as cruel as the Zionists and had also tried to link (their demonstrations) to the demonstrations of the Palestinians against Israel.

"I know their intentions; soon they will start throwing stones to liken their actions to the situation in Israel.

"Soon, the foreign media will report that the country is not stable, the people are demonstrating to topple the Government and then tourists and investors will stop coming," he said.

This was what the Opposition wanted to see happening in the country, Dr Mahathir told reporters upon arrival at the Sultan Abdul Halim airport in Kepala Batas.

He was asked to comment on the Opposition tactics to link its demonstrations with the Palestinian uprising.

On the 100 demands to be made by Gabungan Pelajar-Pelajar Melayu Semenanjung Malaysia to counter Suqiu's 83 demands, Dr Mahathir said he could not comment as he has yet to see them.

"They met me yesterday but did not say anything to that effect. I will have to look at the demands first and see whether they can be considered or otherwise," he added.

Asked if the GPMS move to submit a counter demand if Suqiu does not retract its demands would create racial disunity, Dr Mahathir said such a situation was expected.

"When we set aside what had already been agreed, there will be people who would oppose," he said.

He warned that by making irresponsible demands, all the efforts put to foster racial understaing for the past 43 years would go to waste.

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