

Malaysia condemns attacks on Iraqi targets near Baghdad

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SHAH ALAM: Malaysia has condemned the US-British air attacks on Iraqi targets near Baghdad on Friday.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday he was sad over the bombings which had resulted

in the deaths of more civilians than soldiers.

"We were hoping that the new US administration would reassess the policies of the previous one (over the Iraqi issue).

"I'm even sadder that the bombings had been termed as humanitarian," he said after attending a youth unity gath-

ering at Malawati Stadium here.

"I don't know if killing people is a humanitarian act," Dr Mahathir said of the attacks which reportedly killed 12 civilians and injured scores of others.

The attack, the first in more than two years and the biggest participation of American and

British military aircraft since a four-day bombing campaign in December 1998, drew international flak. (See Page 29)

US President George W. Bush, however, described the attacks as "routine".

Asked whether it was an effort by Bush to gain support among the American people and to consolidate his position,

Dr Mahathir said: "I don't want to speculate on the reasons for the attack."

He added that he wanted to be friends with the new US government.

In PENANG, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the unprovoked onslaught was unjustified.

Urging the Americans not to

make unilateral decisions, Najib said matters related to resolving tensions should be referred to the United Nations Security Council in the best interest of global security.

"Malaysia will protest this extreme action. There is no reason for the Americans to re-

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Bush insensitive to international calls

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sort to such action," he told reporters after opening the Tanjung Umno service and complaints bureau yesterday.

"I believe the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference) and others, especially the Islamic countries, will condemn the attack," he added.

Umno Youth's internation-

al affairs bureau described the attack as an "American revenge" on Iraq.

Bureau chairman Dr Shamsul Anwar Sulaiman said Bush had made his first wrong move and was not

sensitive to international calls to end sanctions against Iraq.

He called on the international media not to give a distorted version of what was happening in Iraq.