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Afghanistan-Bombing

CONTINUED BOMBING OF AFGHANISTAN IS MADNESS, SAYS ANALYST

By: Azman Ujang

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29 (Bernama) -- The continued bombing by the United States in Afghanistan is madness and has gone well beyond its objective of striking against terrorism, a prominent Malaysian military analyst said today.

Abdul Razak Abdullah Baginda said in the beginning, the objective of the U.S. campaign in Afghanistan was to hit at terrorism, especially against Osama bin Laden as the prime suspect for the Sept 11 attacks in New York and Washington, and against the Taliban, which it claimed supports terrorism.

" But now they are hitting at targets which having nothing to do with terrorism and are no longer important," said Abdul Razak, who joined a growing chorus in Malaysia for the U.S. to immediately halt its bombing on the war-ravaged country.

Abdul Razak, who is executive director of Malaysian Strategic Research Centre, a private think-tank on defence, said the U.S. was using the same strategy in Afghanistan as it did in Iraq during the Gulf War although the circumstances were vastly different.

" In Iraq, the Iraqi army had sophisticated tank formations, airports and communication bunkers but Afghanistan is close to the Stone Age. The U.S. is bombing and bombing until there's no more targets, in fact it has run out of targets and that is why they are hitting at civilians, including children," he told Bernama.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Saturday the U.S. should stop the bombing in Afghanistan as it was doing more damage to the civilians than to the Taliban or to Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda movement.

" As far as I know, there has not been any report confirming that any members of the Al Qaeda has been killed in the attacks," said Dr Mahathir amidst reports of the rising toll on civilian casualties after over three weeks of U.S. air strikes.

" The campaign has now become more dangerous with the Americans hitting civilian targets. The line is getting thinner and thinner. It was already thin in the first place in terms of military targets or combatant hits as major targets in the campaign," Abdul Razak added.

And he said: " The U.S. has nothing else to hit and I think the Americans have gone bonkers".

The analyst said from his own knowledge of Afghanistan, the country had no more infrastructure left from nearly a month of incessant bombings and whatever infrastructure it had were very antiquated.

" The nearly one month of bombings means hundreds of thousands of targets have been hit in Afghanistan, which has very little armoured forces or formations.

" You cannot hit at terrorism using conventional methods. It is just not there. Say after two months, the bombings cease, but then another attack such as the one seen in New York were to happen again, so what have your two months of bombings achieved?", he asked.

Describing the bombing of Afghanistan as "the Americans' unbridled arrogance", Abdul Razak said in the Gulf War in 1990, the Iraqis had sophisticated armed forces with very powerful command and control communications intelligence (CCCI) but Afghanistan did not have much.

" The Taliban does not have a sophisticated army. In fact its army is antiquated. They do not have a CCCI. What they have are tents".

Abdul Razak also said he was appalled at this year's Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the United Nations itself when the U.N. had done practically nothing to stop the war in Afghanistan.

" The world body has not done anything to stop the war in Afghanistan and the innocent people are being killed. The U.N. Security Council has not even been convened. To me the Nobel Peace Prize has gone to the gutter," Abdul Razak said.

He said the U.S. now no longer had any moral ground to stand on as its campaign in Afghanistan had triggered off what could well be the biggest human tragedy in history with millions of fleeing Afghans facing starvation especially with winter just round the corner.

" We are now on the verge of witnessing the worst human tragedy unfolding in Afghanistan and the world is watching helplessly.

" And this is perpetrated by the U.S. which claims to be the champions of democracy, humanity and human rights. The American must be joking.

" The worst thing is that the US claims to be champions for democracy and human rights. It has no more moral ground to stand on from now," said Abdul Razak.

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