

# 'Be more balanced in terrorism fight'

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LONDON, Moh. — Malaysia wants a more balanced approach to be taken in the fight against terrorism which not merely focuses on Muslim countries, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told his British counterpart Tony Blair today.

At the 50-minute meeting at No 10, Downing Street, Dr Mahathir explained to Blair that it was important to listen to the views of Muslim countries, and the Muslim community of all countries and not just to government opinion.

"We said that it was not wise to shift the target of war to Iraq. There has to be a balance (in the measures taken), including in Palestine. They have to stop the fighting there.

He told reporters after the meeting he had conveyed Malaysia's views to Blair ahead of the latter's

meeting with United States President George W. Bush, and in light of the American warning that Iraq may be the next target.

"Prime Minister Blair looks ready to accept our views, and I believe he will try to present them to President Bush," he said.

Besides strategies to fight terrorism, he said they also discussed bilateral issues like education.

Malaysia, he said, would like British institutions to set up more education facilities in Malaysia, and for there to be more twinning arrangements with its universities.

Both Dr Mahathir and Blair have forged a cordial relationship over the years through regular meetings since Blair became Prime Minister in May 1997.

Today's meeting was, not unexpectedly, dominated by the issue of terrorism, given that it was re-

scheduled from its original date in September last year because of the terrorist attacks on the US.

The two leaders instead communicated through letter and telephone over this issue, and Malaysia expressed its concern over the manner of battling terrorism.

Britain has been a strong ally of the US-led war, while Malaysia has consistently voiced the views of the Muslim world.

Also present at the meeting was Malaysian High Commissioner to Britain Datuk Salim Hashim.

Dr Mahathir arrived here on Saturday for a five-day working visit.

He later held a meeting with selected members of the House of Lords and House of Commons, organised by the Baroness Uddin of Bethnal Green, at the House of Lords.