

# Mahathir to raise Palestinian issue

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LANGKAWI: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will raise the Palestinian issue with US President George W. Bush when the two leaders meet in Washington next month.

Mahathir said he had promised the Palestine representative to the recent Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) meeting that he would draw Bush's attention to Israeli atrocities against the Palestinians.

"I promised the Palestinian repre-

sentative that I would raise the matter with Bush," he said after a visit to the Crystal Village here.

The centre, in Pulau Rebak, is owned by Langkawi Crystal, Malaysia's leading-producer of 'crystal goods.

The prime minister was asked to comment on a Reuters report that Bush had invited Mahathir for a meeting with him in Washington between May 12 and 14.

The visit to the White House would

be Mahathir's first since 1994 after his meeting with then President Bill Clinton.

Reuters said Mahathir's visit would be a major step towards enhancing bilateral ties between the two countries, with Washington's recognition of him as a moderate Muslim leader.

Mahathir said the meeting would be an opportunity to state Malaysia's stand and that of the OIC in fighting terrorism.