

PM: Vast business opportunities

Private sector should capitalise on contacts established

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SEPANG, Mon. — There are vast business opportunities in Libya, Bahrain and Morocco for the Malaysian private sector to capitalise on but they must be prepared to work hard, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

With the foundation laid and contacts established with the three governments, the Prime Minister said it was now up to the private sector to work things out successfully.

“The potential is good. Malaysian investors, traders and contractors have a good opportunity in these countries.

“We have opened the doors, es-

tablished the contacts with governments and ensured their support. It is now up to private sector to work hard,” he said at a Press conference at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport upon his return from a week-long visit to the three countries.

Dr Mahathir said the Malaysian delegation was well received during the trip, especially in Bahrain which had even allocated seven hectares of land for the construction of a Malaysian trade centre.

The Prime Minister said the leaders he met were interested to learn Malaysia’s secret in transforming the country.

“They wanted to know how and we tried to explain. They will be visiting us to find out more on the matter. In Libya, Col Muammar

Gaddafi met me three times and he literally grilled me on every aspect of the Malaysian economy.”

Besides economic and trade matters, the Prime Minister said the Palestinian issue was also discussed.

He said there was anger because of US support for the Jewish regime and atrocities committed by Israeli soldiers like in the Jenin refugee camp where hundreds were believed killed.

“We do not know how many Palestinians have been killed in Jenin, perhaps tens or hundreds of them. It is clear the act was committed by Israeli soldiers where even homes were levelled while the occupants were still inside.

“It is an atrocity committed by people who once pleaded world

sympathy for what the Nazis did to them. But the atrocities committed by them now are far worse.”

Dr Mahathir said if Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was labelled a man of peace, then “all those suicide bombers are (also) men of peace”.

On Malaysia’s role in correcting the situation, the Prime Minister said Malaysia was a small nation with little clout.

To a suggestion that the world seemed reluctant to act against Israel because it felt sorry for not helping the Jewish community during the holocaust, Dr Mahathir disagreed.

He said the reason behind Israel’s aggression was due to the support it received.

“The Jewish lobby in the US is

very united and powerful whereas the Muslims are divided and they never act together. As a result, they cannot determine who wins the (US) election, but the Jews can do so,” he said.

Dr Mahathir said nobody dared to say anything against the Jewish community which had excellent networking.

“As you know, when I made a statement condemning Soros (currency speculator George Soros) and pointed out that he was a Jew, the whole Jewish world turned against me. They can orchestrate any political action effectively.”

On the other hand, he said the Muslim world with its 1.3 billion followers were not united and the frequent in-fighting sapped their strength further.