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PM: Malaysia not sanctuary for terrorists

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia is not a sanctuary for terrorists. Just because certain people linked to the Al Qaeda terrorist network had met in Malaysia, that does not mean the government was harbouring them. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

"It does not mean when they come to the country, we are giving them sanctuary or support. We do not know who

they are ... we are not aware," he said after officiating at the opening of the Finance Ministry building here.

"If you tell us in the very beginning, it's all right, we can take action, but when we took action before, under our Internal Security Act, they (the Western nations) say it's against the principles of human rights and that we should not take action before a crime is committed.

"So, unfortunately, when a crime is committed, somebody pays a high price, then only you take action."

Mahathir was commenting on a *New York Times* report that top Al Qaeda suspect Ramzi Binalshibh met with two hijackers of the planes which slammed into New York's World Trade Center, in Kuala Lumpur in 2000.

he said terrorists can be found anywhere in the world.