

# Terrorism remains a menace, says Mahathir

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PUTRAJAYA: The most pressing problem facing the world today is terrorism, but moves by many countries to tighten security as a means to combat the menace is not helping much, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He said without any effort to identify the reasons for some people to resort to terrorism, the problem would continue to haunt the world community.

"Fighting terrorists is different from fighting a war. When you fight in a war, when one side wins it will be over, but not so when you are fighting terrorists.

"Even if you think you have managed to fight terrorists in one country, there is no guarantee that the problem is over because those involved in terrorism can always go to other countries.

"As you can see what hap-

pened in Washington DC recently, just one man can terrorise a whole city of millions," he said, in an apparent reference to the sniper who had shot and killed 10 men in the city last month.

Dr Mahathir said this when replying to questions posed by students of Tokyo Metropolitan Kokusai High School who visited him and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali at their official residence yesterday.

To another question, Dr Mahathir said the younger generation could play a vital role in ensuring a better world for tomorrow.

He said young people should try to understand the differences of other peoples' cultures and religions so that they would not face problems when they have to live among cultures that were foreign to them.

Asked by one of the stu-

dents what made him decide to become the Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir said: "I did not decide to become the Prime Minister. It so happened that I was chosen by the people to become a leader and then was appointed as the deputy under the previous Prime Minister."

He said the tradition in Malaysia was that the Deputy Prime Minister would take over from the Prime Minister when he steps down.

Earlier in his speech, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia was indebted to Japan for its help in building the country's economy.

However, he said, the benefits from the relationship did not just benefit Malaysia, but also Japan through higher profit for its companies which invested here.

The 224 second-year students are on a familiarisation trip to Malaysia beginning Monday.