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Abdullah condemns Israel's invasion

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today described the Israeli move against Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat as a cruel act and one which should be strongly condemned.

He said the Government condemned the Israeli attacks on Arafat.

"Israel has never wanted peace. There was an agreement well before this but when Ariel Sharon became the Israeli Prime Minister, he refused to adhere to what was agreed upon earlier.

"He does not want peace ... what he wants is to use military might as he thinks that Israel is a major power in the region. That is why they are using and expanding their military operations to counter the Palestinians," Abdullah said after attending the Umno Wangsa Maju delegates meeting.

Abdullah said it was not right for Israel to put the blame on Arafat for previous attacks made by the Palestinian people against the Israelis.

"It is not easy for Arafat to control the frustrations and anger of the Palestinian people. These people have been oppressed and their rights have been taken away. That is why they reacted in that way.

"It won't be easy for Arafat to wipe out everything in such a short time."

Abdullah said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had proposed that a United Nations peace mission be despatched to the West Bank to ensure peace there.

"But it looks like the superpowers do not agree to this. I believe that only the United Nations peace troopers can stop the war.

It was reported that the Israeli armed forces captured Ramallah and stormed Arafat's headquarters after Sharon declared him as an enemy.

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