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Abdullah-Israel

MALAYSIA HITS OUT AT ISRAEL FOR LATEST MOVE AGAINST PALESTINE

KUALA LUMPUR, March 30 (Bernama) -- Malaysia strongly condemns the Israeli attack on the headquarters of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat yesterday and declaring him as an enemy, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"Israel had never wanted peace and there was an agreement earlier but when Ariel Sharon became Israeli Prime Minister, he refused to adhere to what had been agreed upon," he said.

He said the Israeli Prime Minister did not want peace in West Asia and wanted to use his powers as much as possible because Israel was a major power in the region with its vast military might.

"That's why he is looking for a solution to the problem using military strength," Abdullah said after opening the delegates meeting of the Wangsa Maju Umno division, here today.

Yesterday, the Israeli armed forces captured Ramallah on the West Bank which had been a base for the Intifada fighters after ordering its soldiers to launch major attacks on Palestinian territory.

The Israeli troops had also stormed Arafat's headquarters, after Sharon and his cabinet declared the Palestinian leader and the Palestinian authorities as their enemies.

The moves were in response to the suicide attacks by Intifada fighters which killed 27 Israelis within a three-day period, including 21 killed during the Jewish Passover holiday yesterday.

Abdullah described the Israeli moves against Arafat as a cruel act because it was not easy for the Palestinian leader to control and eliminate the frustrations of the Palestinian people.

"It's not easy for Arafat to control and wipe out everything. The Palestinians are angry because they have been oppressed, they are not given their rights, that's why they are frustrated," said the Deputy Prime Minister.

That was why Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad proposed that the United Nations despatched a peace mission to the West Bank to ensure that there was no longer any quarrels, he said.

-- BERNAMA

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