

15 SEP 2002

Bosnia-Students

MAKE PEACE, NOT WAR, SAY BOSNIANS

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 15 (Bernama) -- Make peace, not war -- that is the message to the world from a group of Bosnian students currently visiting Malaysia.

The leader of the group, Jabucar Faruk, who is the director of Camil Sijaric School, Sarajevo, said his country and people had suffered untold miseries and sufferings during the Balkan war in the early 1990's and everyone should strive to make the world a better place to live in.

"Stop the war whenever you can and build friendship and peace," Jabucar said through an interpreter after leading 23 students and four teachers of the school on a visit to the KL Tower, here, today.

The students' visit to Malaysia was arranged by Umno and they will be visiting various tourist destinations as well sharing their war experience with Malaysian students from several schools during their two-week stay.

Thanking Malaysians and the government for their assistance to the Balkan country during and after the war, Faruk said that only through peace and friendship could future generations have a better life.

"We had a long and terrible war in Bosnia. In that terrible war many children were victims," he said in recalling the war that resulted in the deaths of about 200,000 people, mostly Bosnian Muslims, at the hands of Serb extremists.

Echoing his view, student Jasna Pekic, 16, said that she was glad to see that the three major races in Malaysia -- Malays, Chinese and Indians -- and others were able to live peacefully despite being of different religion and race.

"Well, I hate to see that the three races can't live in one country and I am glad to see that you can," she said in reference to the Bosnians, Croats and Serbs of Bosnia-Herzegovina where ethnic relations is still very fragile.

Pekic said she was fortunate that both her parents and her sister survived the war but at the same time sad that many more had lost their parents.

Meanwhile, Umno executive secretary Tengku Datuk Adnan Tengku Mansor said that the school was rebuilt at a cost of RM5 million, donated by the Malaysian government and schoolchildren.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad visited the school on a stopover after an official visit to Britain in October 2000.

-- BERNAMA

RV AZZ JK