

# Malaysia opposes any war on Iraq: PM

SUN 15 FEB 2003

**JOHOR BARU:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced a change of policy yesterday when he said Malaysia would not support any war on Iraq.

Earlier, the country had been prepared to support a United Nations-sanctioned military action against Iraq.

Mahathir said waging war against a country was an outdated and uncivilised act.

"We will object to attempts to attack Iraq, even if the United Nations decides that war on Iraq is allowed."

He spoke at a gathering held in conjunction with the ground-breaking of an integrated south gateway project and a public housing project.

He said war was not only a violent and cruel action but would result in the loss of many innocent lives and the destruction of a country.

"This (war) is an act which kills innocent people; women, children and old people who are not soldiers will be killed," he said.

"This is the way of people of primitive times, in the Stone Age. The way to settle problems was to kill other people.

"This is why Malaysia rejects war as a way to resolve problems."

Mahathir said Malaysia and its people hated war of any kind and would not agree with attempts to attack any country.

At a press conference later, when asked if it is a new government policy to reject war on any country, he said: "We have always been against war.

"Our stand is, we are against war as the solution to the conflict."

He said if the UN made a resolution allowing the US and its allies to attack Iraq,

Malaysia would protest and would not endorse such a cruel action.

"If the majority of the United Nations has decided and the Security Council decided to go to war against Iraq, they can. But we will not endorse," he said.

The country is currently embarking on the "Peace Malaysia" campaign to show the people's abhorrence of violence, he said.

Touching on ties between Malaysia and Singapore, he said the government wanted to resolve bilateral issues through negotiations.

"There is no point in having war because we will all be destroyed," he said.

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