

PM: Western leaders will never admit mistakes

BY SIM LEOI LEOI

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PUTRAJAYA: Leaders in United States and Britain will never admit they have been wrong in waging war against Iraq, even when they have been proven so by the US-led team which has found no weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in their search of the country.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it was irresponsible for prominent leaders in these two countries to have decided on war, based on such flimsy evidence of WMD in Iraq in the first place.

"In Japan, when they're wrong, they commit hara-kiri, but western people have a different attitude. Even when they're wrong, they're not going to say they're wrong," he said after attending a dry run of the Organisation of Islamic Conference preparations at the Putrajaya Convention Centre here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said leaders in these two countries had told one lie after another in order to convince other nations to agree to the war.

"First, they said that such an attack of WMD would only take 45 minutes, then they said there existed WMD in Iraq, and then, there were plans by Baghdad to make WMD, even if these had not existed at that time.

"I feel sad that leaders, who are themselves responsible for maintaining world peace, have been willing to make a decision, which has resulted in the terrible death of so many people and the destruction of a country, based on very flimsy evidence. This has now been proven to be untrue.

"I don't believe that they don't know. Even if they suspect there are such weapons, they should give (UN weapons inspector) Hans Blix opportunity to carry out a full investigation," he said.

Dr Mahathir was commenting on a statement by CIA adviser David Kay that the team hunting for these

weapons in Iraq had found no stockpile of biological or chemical weapons, six months after the US launched a war against Baghdad.

Asked if Malaysia would initiate any punitive action against these leaders, Dr Mahathir said he did not think this could actually be enforced.

Asked if the OIC would deliberate on this latest turn of events, Dr Mahathir said to do so would not result in the group achieving anything.

"If OIC wants to, it can do many things. OIC is not a grouping of poor countries, but make up of very rich nations. It represents a total of 1.3 billion population and has strategic

materials. If OIC really wants to save Muslims, it seems, to me, very easy.

"But unless it doesn't want to, then that's a different matter," he said, adding that Malaysia would stick to its stand not to participate in any reconstruction process in Iraq unless this task had been completely taken over by the UN.

On a statement by PAS acting president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang that the Government was merely practising a "cloned" version of Islam, Dr Mahathir said these were lies.

"In Islam, those who hurl lies are even worse off than murderers. It's forbidden to lie. The world, except for

PAS, acknowledges Malaysia as an Islamic nation.

"We don't care. Who is PAS? The 1.3 billion Muslims in the world acknowledge, praise and hold Malaysia as a model Islamic nation. But for PAS, this is their politics."

On preparations for OIC, Dr Mahathir said these were going or well although there still needed some minor changes, and more rehearsal by the protocol and liaison officers.

"On the facilities, particularly the use of these very sophisticated computers, we will have some help from experts as these are very advanced machines," he said.