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Mahathir-War

PM: MALAYSIA WILL NOT SUPPORT WAR ON IRAQ

JOHOR BAHRU, Feb 14 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will not support any parties, including the United States and its allies, to wage war on Iraq because it believes war is not the way to settle problems, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

The Prime Minister said waging war against a country was an outdated and uncivilised act.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 there are signs and war on Iraq is allowed," he said at a goodwill gathering in conjunction with the ground-breaking of the integrated south gateway project and a public housing project here.

Dr Mahathir said war was not only a form of violent and cruel action but would also 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 settling problems was to kill other people...this is why Malaysia rejects war as a way to resolve problems," he said.

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

Malaysia was 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 Malaysia wanted to resolve bilateral issues through negotiations.

"That is why we oppose violent means to settle problems and stop dispute between friends...no point to have war because we will all be destroyed," he said.

At a press conference later, when asked if it was 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.

-- BERNAMA
RAM MNY YBY