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Dr M: We'll bring Palestinians here to highlight their sufferings

PETALING JAYA, Sun. - Malaysia will make an effort to bring Palestinians who are victims of Israeli atrocities here to highlight their sufferings.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Palestinians were shot with chemicalcoated bullets and as a result, some had contracted diseases.

"As peace lovers, we sympathise with the Palestinians. This is to show the world the sufferings of the Palestinians who have been oppressed by Israel," the Prime Minister told a gathering organised by the People's Alliance For Peace Malaysia (popularly known as Malaysians for Peace) at the Royal Malaysian Air Force base in Subang on his return from visits to Lebanon, Egypt and Switzerland.

Dr Mahathir was also declared a hero of world peace at the gathering attended by about 2,000 people comprising members of political parties, youth organisations, non-governmental organisations and students.

He said European powers had used Palestinian land to set up Israel to resolve the problem of Jews after the Second World War.

He said the Palestinians had no weapons like helicopter gunships which the Israelis had.

"Some big powers wanted President Yasser Arafat to stop leading Palestine and its people, but shouldn't (Ariel) Sharon also step down as Israeli Prime Minister for his terrorism?"

Saying that Malaysia was a nation that loved peace and strongly believed in holding peace talks rather than going to war, Dr Mahathir said: "Malaysia's style is the peace way. We do not believe in war. The non-governmental organisations must also come in with strong support for peace."

He said many an issue could be resolved through talks and not war and terrorism.

"War does not profit anyone and war is not a way to resolve problems," he said.

He added that war only killed thousands of innocent people and destroyed properties and nations.

"Everything is destroyed and in the end, nobody becomes a victor as can be seen in Lebanon and Vietnam."

He reiterated that the real motive behind plans to attack Iraq was to gain control of the oil resources of the West Asian nation.

He said the attack against Iraq would only lead to innocent Iraqi people and soldiers being killed and not Americans or US troops because the superpower had sophisticated weapons.

He added that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein did not inflict violence against Americans, but Washington was adamant in wanting to invade Iraq even after the Gulf War ended more than 10 years ago.

"While the UN weapon inspectors continue with their task assigned to them, the US is preparing for war," he said.

He said Malaysia would continue to make its stand clear that it believed in peace and hoped that all Malaysians would stand united on the issue.

Earlier, Umno Youth secretary Zulkifli Alwi described Dr Mahathir as a hero for his contributions and views on world peace.

He said Dr Mahathir was brave in voicing Malaysia's stand on various issues such as war and violence which were also supported by other countries.

Zulkifli said a mammoth gathering would be held on Feb 23 at Dataran

Merdeka where a memorandum bearing one million signatures would be handed to Dr Mahathir to prove Malaysians' concern for world peace.