

## **'Umno hiding its hypocrisy in dealings with Israel'**

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Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim has fought back and accused Umno itself of being two-faced or a hypocrite with regard to hiding its relations with Israel.

Anwar said in 1994 his mentor, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, had met the Israeli prime minister and then-former foreign minister Shimon Peres in Paris, and Malaysia is the 15th largest trading partner with that country and its trade with the Zionist regime amounts to 667.6 million Euros (RM2.655 billion).

"I am accused of betraying the Palestinian cause, in support of Israel, whereas the defence minister, an Umno minister, had sat together and met his Israeli counterpart in 2009. This was documented but such references were allegedly deleted.

"The people would also not forget the prime minister (Najib Abdul Razak) had hastily appointed Apco Worldwide, headed by Doron Bergerbest-Eilon, a former Israeli major-general. Umno's hypocrisy over the Palestine issue is not new and that is why I have asked friends and Malaysians to concentrate their effort to help reduce the suffering by Palestinians," he said in a statement.

Anwar, who is also Permatang Pauh MP, was responding to allegations that he was quoted by the Asian Wall Street Journal (AWSJ) of only saying that "he supported efforts to protect Israel", when in fact his full statement after that was "a step which remains contingent on Israel respecting the aspirations of Palestinians" was never considered.

The PKR de facto leader said Najib and his Umno-controlled media had continuously slandered him following the statement, whereas the Umno leaders themselves are two-faced, citing the examples above.

PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat had also asked Anwar to explain his position, and if the interview was wrongly quoted, then the opposition leader should sue AWSJ.

Views of PAS and its syura council welcomed

Anwar said he welcomed the views aired by PAS and its syura council.

"PAS' hard-line stance against the intrusions and atrocities committed against Palestine is shared by all Malaysians. I understand the stance taken by PAS and PKR. PAS feels the presence of Israel as a country is illegal.

"However, PKR shares the view with PAS to see the need for the setting-up of an independent, free and sovereign Palestinian state," he said.

He explained that his full statement reiterates his stand in supporting the Palestinian cause, and his stance against Israel is documented when he led protests over America's support for the regime in front of the United States embassy in Kuala Lumpur in 1973.

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