

Stop this 'madness', PM condemns strike on Gaza hospital

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Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has condemned Israel for “attacking” a hospital in the Gaza Strip, an incident that he described as "madness" by the Zionist regime.

Hamas has blamed Israel for the attack but the Israeli military claimed the hospital was hit by a rocket misfired by other Palestinian militants.

Anwar also reiterated his criticism of the West for keeping silent on Israel's atrocities against Palestinians following the attack, which killed hundreds including women and children.

"It doesn't matter whatever your accusation or whoever you want to blame. This is a result of the war, and that is why we urge them (Israelis) to stop it.

"It is time to defuse the tension. If they continue to do this, it only victimises the women, children, and people who are sick.

"This has come to the level of madness, they have lost the sense of humanity,"

Anwar told reporters after launching a symposium in Putrajaya.

In the incident at Gaza City yesterday, about 500 Palestinians were killed in a blast at the hospital, which health authorities in the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip blamed on an Israeli air strike.

However, Israel's military attributed the blasts at the al-Ahli Arab Hospital to a failed rocket launch by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad group, according to a report by Reuters.

"What is really regrettable was the (silence) of the Western countries. They always spoke out about the issues of human rights," Anwar said.

"But apparently (their version of human rights) has double standards... There is a first-class human and there is another category for 'hamba' (slaves).

"And we object to this in the strongest terms," Anwar said.

Peacekeeping troops

Meanwhile, Anwar was also asked about the status of Malaysia's participation in the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Lebanon - if the country plans to pull out its soldiers following intense exchanges of fire between Lebanon territory

and Israel.

On this, the prime minister said any decision on whether to maintain or withdraw peacekeeping troops would be made collectively with the UN.

"If the troops' safety can be guaranteed, then we can continue (the mission).

"If not, we will bring them home," he told reporters.

According to a statement by the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (Unifil), there were intense exchanges of fire in several areas between Lebanese territory and Israel on Oct 15.

The skirmishes also saw Unifil headquarters in Naqoura hit with a rocket, it said, but there were no casualties.

"Our headquarters in Naqoura was hit with a rocket and we are working to verify from where (the rocket was launched). Our peacekeepers were not in shelters at the time. Fortunately, no one was hurt," said the statement.

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