

Quit your jobs, Dr M tells McDonald's, Starbucks workers
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Ex-prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysians "will not die if they do not use the US goods" and urged those working for US companies such as fast-food giant McDonalds to quit their jobs.

MCPX

"I hope Starbucks and McDonald's employees will stop working there," he told a crowd of 500 people who held a noisy protest outside the National Mosque after Friday prayers.

anti israel attack protest masjid negara 090109 13 "If you have the US dollar, please change to other currencies, or to our ringgit. When you stop using the US dollar its value will drop," Mahathir added.

"They will become a bankrupt country and will not be able to produce weapons for Israel."

The 82-year-old firebrand was a strident critic of the West during his two decades in power, and has continued to hit out since stepping down in 2003, seizing on the issue of conflict in the Middle East during his retirement.

anti israel attack protest masjid negara 090109 11 In 2007, he unveiled plans for an unofficial war crimes tribunal to focus on victims of abuse in Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories, saying the existing international court at the Hague was biased.

The protesters rallied to condemn Washington over its support for Israel and urge Arab countries to cut off oil supplies to the United States.

Shouting "Long live Islam, long live Palestine, destroy Israel!" they said Malaysians should boycott Coca-Cola, Colgate and Starbucks.

anti israel attack protest masjid negara 090109 10 The boycott is spearheaded by the Malaysian Islamic Consumers Association, and the Muslim Restaurant Operators Association which has removed Coca-Cola from the menu at thousands of eateries.

Meanwhile, at least 5,000 people also protested outside the US embassy.

Israel launched its war against Hamas on Dec 27 aiming to end rocket attacks in southern Israel and the smuggling of weapons into Gaza from Egypt.

anti israel attack protest masjid negara 090109 02 Palestinian medics say almost 800 people have been killed since then.

Coca-Cola: 60% of employees are Muslims

Coca-Cola spoke out today against any boycott of its drinks and other US goods, saying it would

only hurt the local economy and citizens.

"As everybody else, we are deeply touched by the human side of the situation in the Middle East," Kadri Taib, Coca-Cola Malaysia public affairs and communications director, said in a statement.

anti israel attack protest masjid negara 090109 07"Given the local nature of our business, we believe that calls for boycotts of our products are not the appropriate way to further any causes, as they primarily hurt the local economy, local businesses and local citizens."

It said the beverage company employs some 1,700 Malaysians, 60 percent of whom are Muslims.

Malaysia's economy is largely export driven and the United States is its second-largest trading partner after neighbouring Singapore.

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