Dr M: Firms should reveal toll collected

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PUTRAJAYA: Highway concessionaires should reveal how much toll they had collected from the public to date, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The former prime minister also suggested that the Government should renegotiate the agreements with the concessionaries.

Dr Mahathir said the volume of traffic might have increased fivefold since toll agreements were inked.

"By right, the income of highway concessionaires should have gone up.

"So I think it is best that information on the collection is revealed," he said when asked about a protest against toll increases by opposition parties and non-governmental organisations at Sunway Pyramid in Petaling Jaya last Sunday.

Dr Mahathir also said: "Toll could be increased, but the rates shouldn't be too high."

He was at a news conference to announce the "Expose War Crimes: Criminalise War" international conference-cum-exhibition, which will be held at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur from Feb 5 to 7.

On the conference, he said that the move to criminalise war had to gain enough support and strength to be recognised by international organisations like the United Nations.

Dr Mahathir said people from places which had witnessed wars and cruelties, like Hiroshima and Iraq, including a victim of the infamous tortures at Abu Gharib prison, would be brought in to tell their stories of sufferings and the futility of war.

He also spoke at length on the hanging of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein recently, describing it as an outcome of a sham trial which saw judges removed and lawyers killed.

Instead of bringing stability to Iraq, Dr Mahathir said, the execution would worsen the situation there.

On reports that US President George W. Bush intended to send more troops to Iraq, he said such a move would not improve things. – Bernama

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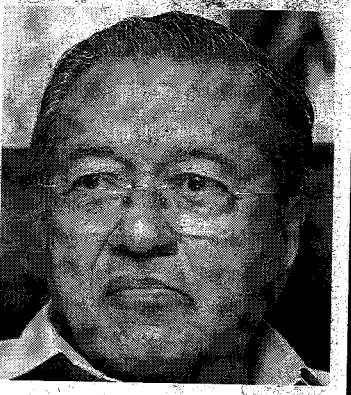
TUN DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD