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Dr Mahathir to launch Viva Palestina on Jan 22

KUALA LUMPUR: Viva Palestina Malaysia (VPM), a coalition of 50 non-governmental organisations supporting people in the occupied territory, will take off on Jan 22.

Former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, a long-time supporter of the Palestinian cause, will launch the organisation at 8pm at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel.

He will also participate in a charity dinner where human rights activist, Lauren Booth, will present a talk entitled "Palestine; the meaning of 'home' in Occupied Palestine".

VPM, formed at the height of Israel's siege on Gaza in December 2008, aims to help create a just end to the conflict in Palestine.

It has organised various events such as charity bazaars, donation drives and talks to provide aid to Palestinians besides raising public awareness about their plight.

The organisation is carrying out projects to help Palestinians set up small businesses, provide employment opportunities for women, build integrated farms for food besides selling home-made handicrafts as a way to preserve and protect Palestinian culture.



Viva Palestina Malaysia chairman Datuk Adnan Mohd Tahir, deputy chairman Siti Jamilah Sheikh Abdullah (left) and Gaza community projects coordinator Noor Aziah Anidin showing the posters for the launching of Viva Palestina Malaysia.

VPM chairman Datuk Adnan Mohd Tahir said the dinner was to help raise funds for the projects.

He said that 50 per cent of Palestinians were unemployed with 80 per cent of their families needing aid.

"These projects will help give them

a new lease on life by providing job opportunities and basic necessities."

For more information on purchasing tables for the dinner, advertising space in a souvenir book or making a donation, please contact Azra at 016-2094500 or Syafiq at 019-3488050.