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Drawing attention to plight of war-torn children

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Kuala Lumpur Foundation to Criminalise War (KLFCW) hopes to draw global attention to humanity, especially the plight of children victimised in war.

Its founder and chairman, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said children in war-torn countries not only suffered from injuries and death, but also of losing the people they depended on and were left unaided.

"Children are too small to carry anything, certainly not a weapon, yet they are shot and considered collateral damage," he said at a press conference after speaking at the international conference on war-affected children at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

He said losing their family members and witnessing their murder would leave a negative impact on their minds.

Dr Mahathir demanded a more liberal democracy and human rights, adding that fighting to criminalise war was a long struggle which might take decades.

"But we have to start somewhere and for now, we want to teach the younger generation what war is all about. We have to change the mindset of many and make them understand that war is not glorious but the taking of innocent lives."

He said one could not say how long the attacks against the Palestinians might last when there was a bigger power encouraging Israel by supplying them tools for war.

"It will take a long time to convince the people in America that what they are doing is wrong."

KLFCW trustee Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali announced the setting up of the Criminalise War Club in schools to create awareness among the younger generation.

"The club is to educate students and help them appreciate a peaceful country and understand why war is a crime," she said, adding that the club had been approved by the Education Ministry.

The club would be introduced in two schools, Tunku Kursiah College and Cempaka International School, to kick-start the programme.

Siti Hasmah, who is also the founder of the club, said she hoped other schools would soon set up the club.