

Dr M: **Oppression** will cause more terror attacks

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► 'Frustration among some Muslims, particularly Palestinians, main reason for such acts'

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad expects more acts of terror as long as the Muslim world continues to be oppressed.

He said frustration among some Muslims, particularly Palestinians, was the main reason behind many of the terrorist attacks worldwide, and it was important that all countries recognise this in order to address the issue.

Mahathir cited Israel's move to claim Palestinian land as an example of what triggered terror attacks, noting how Israelis had forced Palestinians out of their home country.

"It seems Israel can do anything it likes without being condemned by the world. The important thing is, we must recognise the reason behind these acts (of terror). Muslims are acting not to regain their land but to vent their anger," he said at the International

Colloquium Series on Islamic Understanding of Demystifying Islamophobia yesterday.

"If we don't recognise this, then these acts of terror will continue and it will become worse as more people become frustrated. Those without the ability to fight conventional wars will resort to terrorist acts."

Mahathir said the number of terrorist attacks would decrease once the claims of suppressed Muslim countries were respected.

He also hit out at those who carried out the attacks, which he said had failed to achieve anything other than claim the loss of numerous innocent lives.

Mahathir suggested those oppressed should try to address their issues by way of diplomacy, noting that many quarters, including some within Europe and the United States, were sympathetic to the plight of the Muslim world.

He noted diplomacy could win some over while acts of terror would only push potential supporters to back Israel.

He added while it was easy to blame others for one's hardship, it was also pertinent to self-reflect and know what they have done that contributed to the rise of Islamophobia.

On a separate matter, Mahathir acknowledged the Pakatan Harapan (PH) government was not perfect, but said the coalition was doing its best to put the country back on the right track.

He added following the change in federal government last year, the country had suffered financially because "money was stolen by the previous administration" and that PH was in the midst of retrieving all the missing money and to rebuild the nation.

"Of course we are not perfect, but we will try, because we feel it's our duty to have good governance, where justice is upheld all the time, where the people's welfare is of great interest to the government and where we want to see the gap between the rich and the poor get smaller."

Mahathir also branded Barisan Nasional leaders as being "not very Islamic" for their involvement in corruption, saying many of them had gone astray from Islamic teachings, adding the rakyat made the right choice in voting them out.