

Mahathir expresses condolences to Japan

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By Mahathir Mohamad

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Condolences and sympathies seem inadequate to express one's sorrow over what has happened to the tsunami-struck people in the town and cities of northeastern Japan.

The pictures in the newspapers and the video-clips cannot depict the terror and the fears of those who perished in the worst tsunami to strike Japan or any other country in the world, the agony of those who survive only to learn of the loss of families, friends and neighbors, and the horror at the massive destruction wrought on cities, towns and villages that only moments before sheltered innocent people, untroubled by fears of such a catastrophe.

We do not know yet the number of people killed or missing, but certainly it must be very large and we grieve for them. May they rest in peace. I extend my condolences to the surviving members of the families of those lost.

And I pray that those who are missing will be found, hopefully alive. In this I am certain that all Malaysians join with me in expressing their sorrow and sadness over this unprecedented catastrophe.

The Japanese people are known for their capacity to endure tragedies from the natural disasters that often befall their country. Although this catastrophe might seem too much for them to bear, I feel sure in time that they will be able to overcome their sorrows and rebuild the devastated towns and countryside. They have the sympathy and support of the whole world. Certainly Malaysians share their sorrows in this moment of their trial.

As if the earthquake and the tsunami are not enough, there is now the threat posed by the explosions at the nuclear power plants. At a time when many are planning to build such power plants, this tragedy has befallen the pioneers in the peaceful exploitation of nuclear power.

We cannot but be reminded of the sufferings of the Japanese people from the only deployment of nuclear weapons in anger. Now a nuclear tragedy has struck the Japanese again.

It is sad that it is again the Japanese people who must show the world the dangers of using fissile material about which our knowledge is inadequate, especially with regard to the necessary safety measures in the event of damage and leakages that can unleash harmful radiation into the environment.

No doubt we will learn more about the management of nuclear power. But it is sad that it takes such a terrible tragedy for us to learn about the dangers that nuclear power plants still pose and to realize the importance of correct locations.

I pray and hope that the radiation will not cause more tragedies to the Japanese people and indeed to people far from the site of the disaster.

The people of Malaysia owe a lot to Japan and the Japanese. At the time of this tragedy and trial, our hearts go out to the unfortunate victims in Sendai and the coastal areas around it. I am glad that the Malaysian government has offered to send rescue teams to work with those in Japan.

I feel sure that the people who have lost family and friends and property will be helped to rebuild their lives, and I hope and pray that they will be spared such horrors in the future.

May I express my condolences to the bereaved families and may you overcome your trials and tribulations to rise again as the great people of a great country

Source: <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/ea20110321a1.html>