

Dr M: Anwar does not think of the welfare of Palestinians
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PUTRAJAYA: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's call to protect Israel's security should not come as a surprise due to his long-standing relationship with the Jewish community, said former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

In airing his disappointment over Anwar's statement, Dr Mahathir said Anwar did not think of the safety of Palestinians, whose lives were in a more precarious position compared to Israelis.

"You can't be friendly with them and against them," he told reporters, referring to Anwar's relationship with the Jewish community, after delivering a speech at the "Razak Lecture Series" here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on Anwar's statement in an interview with the Wall Street Journal where the latter had said he would support "all efforts to protect the security of the state of Israel".

Dr Mahathir, who has been in the forefront of aiding Palestinians since his retirement, said thousands of Palestinians were languishing in Israeli jails.

He also said that Anwar, who was once highly touted to succeed him as the prime minister before his sacking in 1998, loved to be praised by the West and always wanted to be seen as a "modern and trendy individual" and saw Malaysians as old-fashioned.

"He has only one ambition. He will support those who support him, even if it means tarnishing our image overseas. It's all about him."

Dr Mahathir said Anwar should remember that his constituency was in Malaysia and that the support he had garnered outside the country would not win him votes in the next general election.

He added that Anwar was a "man for everyone", which saw him supporting Hindraf to appeal to the Indian community, calling for the dismantling of affirmative action to win over the DAP and portraying himself as a religious man to attract the Malays.

"He is a man who is trying to fit with everybody's wishes to get the support so he can become prime minister," he said, adding that the pious image that Anwar had once projected had even fooled him into inviting Anwar to join Umno.

On Sunday, Foreign Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman said Malaysia had never supported Israel in its conflict with Palestine.

He said this differed from Anwar, who has clearly showed his acceptance and support for Israel's actions against the Palestinians.

Perdana Global Peace Foundation adviser Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir said Anwar was using the same excuse to support Israel as often used by the terrorist nation to justify its terrorism acts.

Mukhriz said although Israel was a terrorist nation, judging by its acts of killing Palestinians and bulldozing their homes in the West Bank, it always justified the actions as defending its national security.

"Israel had even used the same excuse when its troops shot and killed activists participating in the Freedom Flotilla transporting supplies for people in the Gaza Strip.

"Now, a person who holds the lofty ambition to become Malaysia's prime minister is using the same excuse to support the terrorist nation. Anwar has betrayed Palestine and Muslims all over the world," said Mukhriz, who is also international trade and industry deputy minister, in a statement. Additional reporting by S. Sittamparam

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