

Najib: Look beyond aid to build a better Palestine
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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysians can help plan for a better Palestine beyond providing funds, medical aid and emergency relief, said Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

"Palestine needs to evolve in order to survive. The Malaysia-Palestine Youth Movement (MPYM) is a step towards that better Palestine and relations between both countries.

"It takes advantage of the youth platform as they represent the hope and dreams of both nations. Youths also have the exuberance, ideas and energy to build and strengthen relations," the Prime Minister said in his address in the programme book for the inaugural "Evolution for Palestine" conference organised by MPYM here yesterday.

Malaysia, he said, could offer a vision of the future for Palestine, as well as its resources and assistance where needed.

"We can also learn about what strife, unrest and war can do to a nation something we want to avoid in its entirety," said Najib who visited war-torn Gaza in January.

MPYM chairman Datuk Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim said it was time to envision a better Palestine and to make that vision a reality.

"What better place than Malaysia to begin a dream, to find ideas and draw a picture of what a sovereign nation will look like.

"I hope one day to see Palestine again, standing tall as a peaceful and progressive sovereign nation," he said in his foreword.

MPYM joint president Shahrul Nasrun Kamarudin said the conference was organised to brainstorm ideas on how to make Palestine a better place, especially for youths in the education, economic and social development front.

"We want to help Palestinian youths develop their potential. Instead of giving them fish, we are now giving them fishing rods," he said yesterday, adding that MPYM is also represented by 11 Palestinian leaders, including a joint president.

More than 400 Palestinian students are studying in local universities.

During the conference, Palestinian speaker Malaka Shwaikh called on Malaysian universities to help students in Palestine through exchange programmes as well as to help publish their books,

Prof Dr Sidek Baba of the International Islamic University said Malaysia could help enhance the human resource development in Palestine by building better educational infrastructure there.

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