

We cannot accept Israeli Athletes, says Dr Mahathir

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VIENNA, Jan 22 (Bernama) -- Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has reiterated that Malaysia cannot accept Israeli athletes as they come from a criminal country.

The prime minister said people who are undesirable to the country must be kept out and this included people suspected of being terrorists and the like.

"We don't want to have anything to do with them (Israel), including their people. If they want to compete in sports they can go to other countries. But for Malaysia, they are coming from a criminal country and we cannot accept them.

"Every country has the right to accept or refuse entry to other people. We have that right and we must exercise that right," he told Malaysian and foreign reporters after delivering the keynote address at the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA) at the Vienna International Centre (VIC) here today.

He highlighted that these athletes come from a country which does what it liked including building settlements in other people's territories and excluding the very people from that country.

"They have raided our ship carrying aid to the Gaza people, there are many other things done by Israel that are against international laws and against morality.

Meanwhile, on corruption Dr Mahathir said leaders must be well chosen and if there were any signs that a leader was corrupt, action must be taken to remove the leader.

Dr Mahathir had voiced the same when attending the Third International Conference on the

Emergence of Africa (ICEA-III) in Dakar, Senegal last week.

Israel had objected to Malaysia banning its swimmers from competing in the 2019 World Para Swimming Championships scheduled to be held in Kuching in July.

Malaysia has been an outspoken critic of Israel over its atrocities against the Palestinian people.

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