

Umno Youth protest

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Wing wants US to stop Israeli attacks in West Asia

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KUALA LUMPUR: Umno Youth deputy chief Khairy Jamaludin and a group of protesters tried to force their way into the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday to hand over a memorandum to US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

They were, however, prevented from doing so by members of the Federal Reserve Unit (FRU).

But Khairy was later allowed into the centre where he presented the memorandum to a US representative.

He told reporters inside the centre that the memorandum expressed the feelings of the Malaysian people.

"The United States is abetting the violence by Israel against Lebanon and is part and parcel of what is happening to the Lebanese and Palestinian people," he said.

"Rice is here at the invitation of the Malaysian Government.

"It is their decision but the majority of the Malaysian people do not want her here, as the United States is not doing anything to stop the genocide in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip.

"This is not a religious issue or Islam against the West or against Christianity.

"This is a humanitarian issue where many people are dying.

"What we are seeing today is nothing less than genocide. It is nothing less than murder by the Israeli forces of innocent people."

Earlier, shortly after Friday prayers at the KLCC mosque, about 2,000 protesters chanting anti-American and anti-Israel slogans had marched to the convention centre, where the 39th Asean Ministerial Meeting was in progress.

The demonstration, organised by Umno Youth together with the youth sections of Barisan Nasional component parties, was to protest against US support of Israel and Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Palestine.

The demonstration lasted three



LOUD AND CLEAR: PAS members protesting against Israeli attacks in front of the US Embassy in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Thousands of demonstrators marched from Masjid Kampung Baru to the embassy after Friday prayers despite the heavy rain. At the same time, Umno Youth held a protest at the KLCC. — Bernamapic

hours and even a heavy downpour failed to deter the protesters.

Khairy, with his left arm in a sling, gave a 30-minute speech decrying the attacks and demanding that the United States get Israel to cease its attacks.

He said Israel was using weapons and ammunition provided by the United States.

He gave Rice five minutes to come out and receive the memorandum.

When there was no sign of this happening, Khairy together with about 200 supporters pushed their way past the FRU line.

In the commotion, some supporters, including Khairy, fell.

Other police personnel moved in to form a human chain in front of the entrance to the convention centre.

Despite this, Khairy and a handful

of supporters managed to get through.

They squatted outside the entrance for two hours.

Besides Khairy, the others who waited outside included Umno Putera chief Datuk Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim and Datuk Norza Zakaria, political secretary to Finance Minister II Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yacop.

Khairy was finally allowed into the building and was seen being taken to the Police Control Centre.

He came out about 20 minutes later and told his supporters that the memorandum was with Rice.

At a press conference after he emerged, Khairy said: "Today, Malaysia's youth have told the United States that the violence must be stopped and that Rice's presence in Malaysia is not welcomed. She is

only here because of the courtesy and honour of the Malaysian Government."

"She has no right to be here because the United States has done nothing to stop the genocide against Palestine and Lebanon," he said.

When pressed whether he had personally handed the memorandum to Rice, he said he could only confirm that the memorandum was in her hands.

Wanita Umno will write to the United States and United Nations offices here to protest against Israel's military action in south Lebanon.

Its chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, who is International Trade and Industry Minister, said the wing condemned the violence and inhuman conditions subjected to the Lebanese in the fighting.