

Dr M heads panel to probe four leaders

NSF- 8/2/2007

KUALA LUMPUR: A Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Commission formed on the final day of the Global Peace Organisation Conference will start investigating a series of charges made against four world leaders.

The commission, headed by former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, will check on the allegations by petitioners who were war victims and survivors of war crimes from countries such as Iraq and Palestine.

If the commission manages to establish a *prima facie* case, United States president George W. Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Australian Prime Minister John Howard and former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon would have to face the consequences of being branded as war criminals.

Some of the charges presented by the legal counsel Matthias Chang claim that Bush, Blair and Howard misled their respective Congress and Parliament to wage war against Iraq, and that Bush and Blair had embarked on a campaign to destroy Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine's economy and military.

Other charges said the leaders had manipulated the United Nations Security Council.

Speaking at a Press conference yesterday, Dr Mahathir said once a case was established, the results would be sent to the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal, which was being set up by a pro-tem committee.

The pro-tem committee includes Datuk Abdul Kadir Sulaiman, a former Malaysian Federal Court judge and prominent legal figures like Tunku Datuk Dr Sofiah Jewa, Datuk Mohd Saari Yusoff and Professor Shad Faruqi.

The War Crimes Commission studying the case comprised Datuk Dr Yaacob Hussain Merican, Zainur Zakaria, Musa Ismail, Professor Dr Mohd Akram Shair Mohamed and Professor Gurdial Singh Nijar.

Asked on what would be among the actions to be taken against the leaders if they were found guilty, Dr Mahathir said:

"We would like to hang them like Saddam Hussein but since we are not going to see that happen, we will find other ways of making their lives miserable."

Earlier, the Global Peace Organisation committee concluded its three-day "Expose War Crimes, Criminalise War" Conference at the Putra World Trade Centre.