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KUALA LUMPUR, OCT 6 (BERNAMA) -- VARIOUS CRITICISMS WERE THROWN AT MALAYSIA BY THE AMERICAN PRESS FOR ORDERING ASIAN WALL STREET JOURNAL (AWSJ) JOURNALISTS JOHN BERTHELSEN AND RAPHAEL PURA, WHOSE WORK PERMITS WERE REVOKED BY THE GOVERNMENT RECENTLY, TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

DISCLOSING THIS TODAY, PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION WAS CRITICISED BY, AMONG OTHERS, THE +WALL STREET JOURNAL+ AND THE +NEW YORK TIMES+ IN TWO ARTICLES AND AN EDITORIAL PUBLISHED ONE DAY.

+THESE NEWSPAPERS SAID THAT WE WERE HEADED TOWARDS BURMA,+ HE TOLD REPORTERS ON ARRIVAL AT THE SUBANG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HERE AFTER ATTENDING THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

AN EDITORIAL IN THE WALL STREET JOURNAL HAD SAID THAT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SHOULD GO TO BURMA INSTEAD OF NEW YORK BECAUSE IT CLAIMED MALAYSIA'S ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS HEADING FOR BURMA'S ECONOMIC DOLDRUMS.

+I DO NOT QUITE UNDERSTAND WHAT THE EDITORIAL MEANT BUT IT SEEMS THAT THEY ARE REALLY ANGRY AND HAD SHOWN DISRESPECT IN THE WAY THEIR EDITORIAL WAS WRITTEN,+ HE ADDED. -- MORE
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HE SAID HE ALSO MET WALL STREET JOURNAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE WARREN PHILIPS. THE WALL STREET JOURNAL IS A NEW YORK PUBLICATION WHICH CONTROLS THE AWSJ.

+I HAVE GIVEN OUR VIEWS ON THE MATTER BUT APPARENTLY WE ARE JUST WASTING OUR TIME,+ HE ADDED.

THE PRIME MINISTER FELT THAT ENCIK PHILLIPS ADOPTED A BIASED ATTITUDE ON THE MATTER, SAYING THE NEWSPAPER'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE CONSIDERED THE AWSJ JOURNALISTS AS +PEOPLE WHO NEVER LIED NOR DID ANYTHING WHICH COULD RESULT IN THEM BEING ORDERED TO LEAVE MALAYSIA+.

+AFTER HE EXPRESSED HIS OPINION, I FELT IT WAS NO USE TALKING TO SUCH PEOPLE,+ HE ADDED.

CLARIFYING AN INACCURATELY REPORTED STATEMENT HE HAD MADE IN NEW YORK, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID: +I DID NOT SAY WE WERE WILLING TO ORDER AMERICAN DIPLOMATS OUT OF MALAYSIA. WHAT I SAID WAS THE UNITED STATES TOO HAD ALSO ORDERED PEOPLE TO LEAVE THE US+.

+IF THEY COULD DEPORT PEOPLE WITH DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY, WHY CANNOT WE DEPORT JOURNALISTS?+ HE SAID. -- BERNAMA
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