

# Time for local media to post journalists abroad

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THE time has come for more local media houses to station their journalists abroad to enable better flow of local interests and related news into the country, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said if this is not done Malaysian readers will continue to be fed with news from foreign sources which sometimes does not conform with the thinking, attitude and values of the local people.

"If this trend persists then we may succumb to the ways and thinking of the West. We may have succeeded in eliminating physical colonisation through independence but our thinking is still being colonised by the Western media," he said at the Malaysian Press Institute luncheon and awards ceremony in Petaling Jaya.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government understands the financial and manpower constraints of the local media if they were to station their representatives overseas but this could be overcome through cooperation among the various organisations.

He said this does not mean that newspapers in this country should stop subscribing to foreign wire

based on the viewpoints of foreigners whose perspectives differ from the opinions of many Malaysians.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the local media should realise that freedom of the press should not solely mean being free of government control but they must also ensure that they are not influenced by others.

"Taking an adversarial attitude towards the Government should not be an indication of their credibility. This does not mean that the newspaper cannot criticise the Government but ignoring the good just to defend freedom and credibility and maybe commercial interests, is actually to contravene the rights and freedom given to the newspapers," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said newspapers and journalists should not be too obsessed with getting news by insisting that they should be written because it is the right of the public to know.

"We will not die if we do not know something. We cannot know everything because there are too many happenings around the world," he said.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that since the local media have access to so many news sources, it is important for them to be selective.

and news services but there is a need to encourage the reporting of international issues from the local perspective.

Citing political developments in Eastern Europe, the Prime Minister said the news written were entirely