

Dr Mahathir: Prevent foreign colonisation of people's thinking

Don't depend on West, PM tells media

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — The Prime Minister today told the local news media that their dependence on foreign sources for news reports would not help the people to be free from Western colonisation of their thinking.

He said should this continue, Malaysian values, attitudes and views would be gradually undermined and Malaysians would adopt Western ways of thinking, which would be advantageous to the West.

"Although Malaysians have been freed from physical colonisation with independence, the people can still be colonised in

their thinking because of the control by the Western media," said **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.**

He suggested that the local media set up overseas branches to prevent the colonisation of thoughts.

He proposed that the local media work out some form of co-operation as he understood the constraints of

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manpower and finances facing the local media.

He was speaking at the 1988 Malaysian Journalism Awards ceremony at a hotel here.

He also suggested that local journalists venture into writing on international issues. They can take an unorthodox approach but their facts must be logical, accurate and concrete.

For example, Dr Mahathir said, the approach of Malaysian journalists on the developments in Eastern Europe might not be the same as the views of Western media men.

He also advised journalists to be responsible when confronted with racial and religious issues as such writings could easily offend the feelings and sensitivities of the various races.

"This is even more so if the issues are purposely blown out of proportion. I am not saying that the media should not at all report on racial and religious issues but journalists must be fair and sincere when writing such reports.

"Journalists have to weigh whether such reports will bring benefits to society or otherwise."

Dr Mahathir also reminded the newspapers that the media's credibility did not depend on it taking up an adversarial role against the Government.

He said that Press freedom did not just mean the media to be free from Government control. "They must also be free from other parties which could exploit this medium for their interests.

"Therefore, Press freedom is not dependent on the media being an adversary of the Government."