

Dr Mahathir: Freedom can't be at expense

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of moral values  
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**By Jeffrey Ramayah  
and Jahabar Sadiq**

**KUALA LUMPUR, Sat.** — The Government will not allow the traditional moral values of its people to be compromised even if it results in Malaysia being labelled as a country with a low level of human freedom, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said Malaysia preferred not to be grouped with such countries labelled as having high levels of human freedom but which condone nudity and allow pornographic materials to be made freely available.

The Prime Minister said there were reports of a European country, categorised as having a very high level of human freedom, where free sex was practised and where even 12-year-olds were known to be allowed to have sexual relationships.

"If this is what is meant by a high level of human freedom, we do not want it," he told reporters after chairing a three-hour Umno supreme council meeting at the party's headquarters.

"Even if we are cut down and quartered, we will not give the people the right to do such things."

chase them out of their own country.

"The homes of the Arabs are destroyed in their own territory and the UNDP report says that the level of human freedom there is higher than that in Malaysia.

"I do not know what yardstick or basis they used to come out with such a comparison.

"If people want to say that Israel is much better than they can go to that country."

He believed that such unfavourable reports about Malaysia were the efforts of certain quarters to tarnish the good image of Malaysia.

Dr Mahathir said he was disappointed that attention was given only to Asia where the people are not whites when deciding on issues such as the Generalised System of Preferences.

"While we want to see Eastern European countries develop rapidly, why are there no trade restrictions on these nations but only in Asia.

"I cannot help but note that there are developed countries which practise racist sentiments.

"They accuse us of being racists but they are the real

Dr Mahathir was commenting on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report which said Malaysia scored high marks for human development but performed poorly in human freedom.

He said he did not know who gave the UNDP the powers or rights to make comparisons between one country and another.

"They even went to the extent of saying that the level of human rights in Malaysia is lower than that of Israel.

"This is indeed a terrible accusation because we all know there are rampant killings in Israel and the Israelis shoot the Arabs and

racists who only care for the well-being of the whites."

Dr Mahathir said some developed European countries claimed to have freedom of the Press but pointed out that the Asian countries did not have access to the Western and European media.

He said the Western and European media adopted their own censors and highlighted poverty in Asian countries.

"I have been to Europe and have seen people sleeping on the sidewalks. We may have a few people sleeping on the roadside but one can imagine what will happen to people sleeping on the sidewalks in cold countries."