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Mahathir-Media

MAHATHIR HITS AT IRRESPONSIBLE WESTERN MEDIA

From Salmu Hashim

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 2 (Bernama) -- The international media came in for some good drubbing here Friday by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who accused irresponsible Western media of spreading damaging lies. Describing them as the "controlled 'free' Western media", he said, the people who controlled the media controlled people's minds and, probably, controlled the world.

The Prime Minister's devotion to the international media -- 12 paragraphs in his 56-paragraph speech -- was unprecedented, especially in the context of the UN where most leaders normally voiced concern about world politics.

His attention to the international media even surpassed his two-paragraph reference to the peace accord signed between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel.

He told the 48th UN General Assembly: "What we see and hear and witness... is what the media decide we should see and hear and witness." -- more

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Through the media "...we can also see Michael Jackson doing his moon-walk" even as mass murder and massacres of the most brutal kinds were being committed at that very moment, he said.

He believed that the powerful world media was controlled by "a very few people in the west" whom he described collectively as "Big Brothers".

Interestingly, Dr Mahathir had a meeting with media magnate Rupert Murdoch at his hotel suite Thursday.

At a press conference for Malaysian journalists following the meeting, he said that he expressed his objection to Murdoch for having "so much of the press under his control that it's not healthy."

He added: "He said that he would take heed of our views and he'll try not to be bias.

"So, although I spoke with Mr Murdoch quite nicely, it doesn't mean that I mus'nt say nasty things about him. What he does to me, I will do to him."

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In his speech, he said Malaysia would continue to speak out against powerful nations which "do wrong" because "we dare speak our minds."

He added: "Here at the UN, we will say what we feel we should say. Of course, the controlled 'free' Western media will not publish it."

"In any case, it is what we achieve that counts with us. We can do without Western approval."

Dr Mahathir arrived here on Tuesday and will head for London with his wife, Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Ali Friday before heading for home. -- Bernama"

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