

# British press out to silence us, says Dr M

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KOTA BARU: The spate of adverse reports by the British media is meant to tarnish Malaysia's image in the eyes of the world so that its voice on international issues can be silenced, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

"They are trying to paint a bad image of our country and its leaders so that we will not be able to speak out and make our stand against what we feel is wrong.

"Even though we cannot read the minds and hearts of those who control the media, their unfounded allegations against us will reach people far and wide and damage our image.

"They will highlight their reports and play down our explanations. Indirectly and directly, these press reports are meant to suppress us and make us lose our credibil-

ity," he told about 1,000 senior Federal officers in Pengkalan Chepa.

The prime minister was having a meeting and a dialogue with them during his day visit to Kelantan.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir held a closed-door meeting with state Umno lead-

ers before visiting a kampung in Melor, near here.

He said Malaysia did not have any bad intentions against the British Government or its people.

"We have no other choice but to protest against the lies created by their press," he said.

He told the people that it was important to be economically, financially and politically stable so that the country cannot be "colonised" or bullied in any way by outsiders.

"We are lucky that we can take actions against those who are unfair to us. Many countries cannot afford to defend themselves in such manner as they are weak and depend on other countries for survival," he said.

Dr Mahathir also stressed that the people must help push Malaysia to a level where it cannot be colonised or bullied anymore by any country.