

British media still 'full of lies'

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad described British media reports about Malaysia and the Government's programmes as "a pack of lies".

He said the Government was still not satisfied with the reports in the British media about Malaysia, its leaders and the Government.

"I find it a waste of time. They just cannot tell the truth," he told reporters after chairing the Umno supreme council meeting.

When asked whether the lifting of the ban imposed on British companies from participating in any new contracts by Government agencies and departments meant that the Government was satisfied with the coverage given by the British media, he said: "We are not satisfied with the British media."

Dr Mahathir said as far as the Government was concerned the British media can write or broadcast anything about the country and the Government.

"They can write or say what they want as long as we continue to improve our economic conditions and bring development.

The unconditional lifting of the ban was announced by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday.

The ban was imposed on Feb 26 this year in protest against unfair British media reports on Malaysia and its leaders alleging corruption in the award of public contracts to British firms.

The ban had cost British firms several billions of ringgit in lost contracts.

When asked to comment on Election Commission secretary Datuk Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman's statement that the Commission should be empowered to determine a fair and balanced programme for political broadcasts and advertisements through State-owned media for all political parties, Dr Mahathir said that was purely up to the media.

"Those who own the media control the coverage.

"I do not tell the Press to write good things about me," he said.

He said coverage was the responsibility of media owners, not the Government.