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Mahathir-Discredit

MAHATHIR SPEAKS OF FOREIGN ATTEMPTS TO DISCREDIT HIM

KUALA LUMPUR, June 27 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today spoke of numerous articles in the foreign media as well as a new book written by a Westerner which blamed him for all of Malaysia's problems.

"I read a lot of articles and a book written about me recently. The impression given is that I'm a devil. I don't know why the Westerners are so angry with me," he told reporters on his return from a 17-day overseas vacation.

"All of them blame me, including for the deficit in the balance of payments and the construction of megalomaniac projects as if they themselves do not indulge in megalomania," he said.

The prime minister said it was the foreign powers that were responsible for making aeroplanes besides having big military forces and forcing the developing countries to buy modern weapons from them.

"We spend all our money on buying their arms)," he said.

"I could say that we should cancel the purchase of arms from them, we just buy pistols or small guns...after all we are not going to war with anybody," the prime minister said.

He said they kept selling their arms to every country but if these countries bought them, they would speak of an arms race.

"I just cannot understand the hatred they have for me, even articles in the Financial Times," he said.

The prime minister said decisions taken by the Malaysian government were not solely his but the collective responsibility of the Cabinet.

"I can assure you that sometimes the Cabinet disagrees with me and I have to go along with them," he said.

The prime minister also disclosed that he now had to leave Cabinet meetings if projects being discussed had something to do with his relatives.

"I get chased out of Cabinet meetings. Never before have I seen previous prime ministers having to leave Cabinet meetings, no matter what happened".

He said Malaysia's economic success had attracted a lot of envy and dislike in certain Western media.

" What they have written about Malaysia is grossly unfair," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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